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OCTOBER, 1956 - 25c

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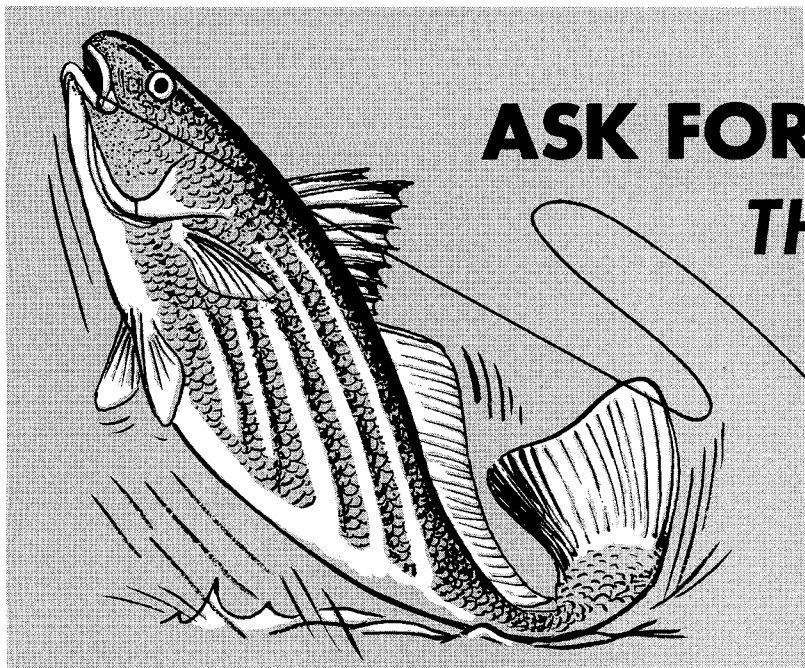

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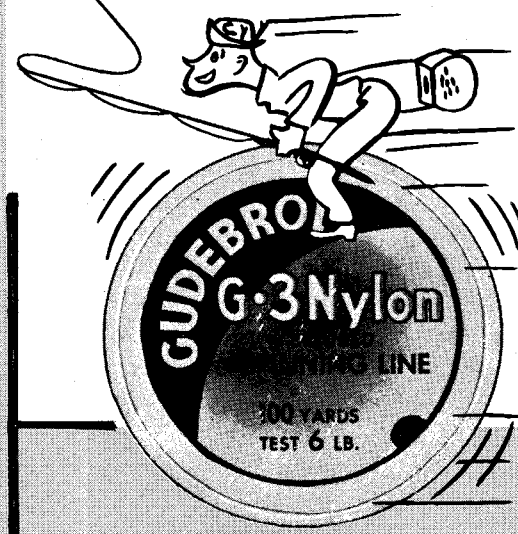

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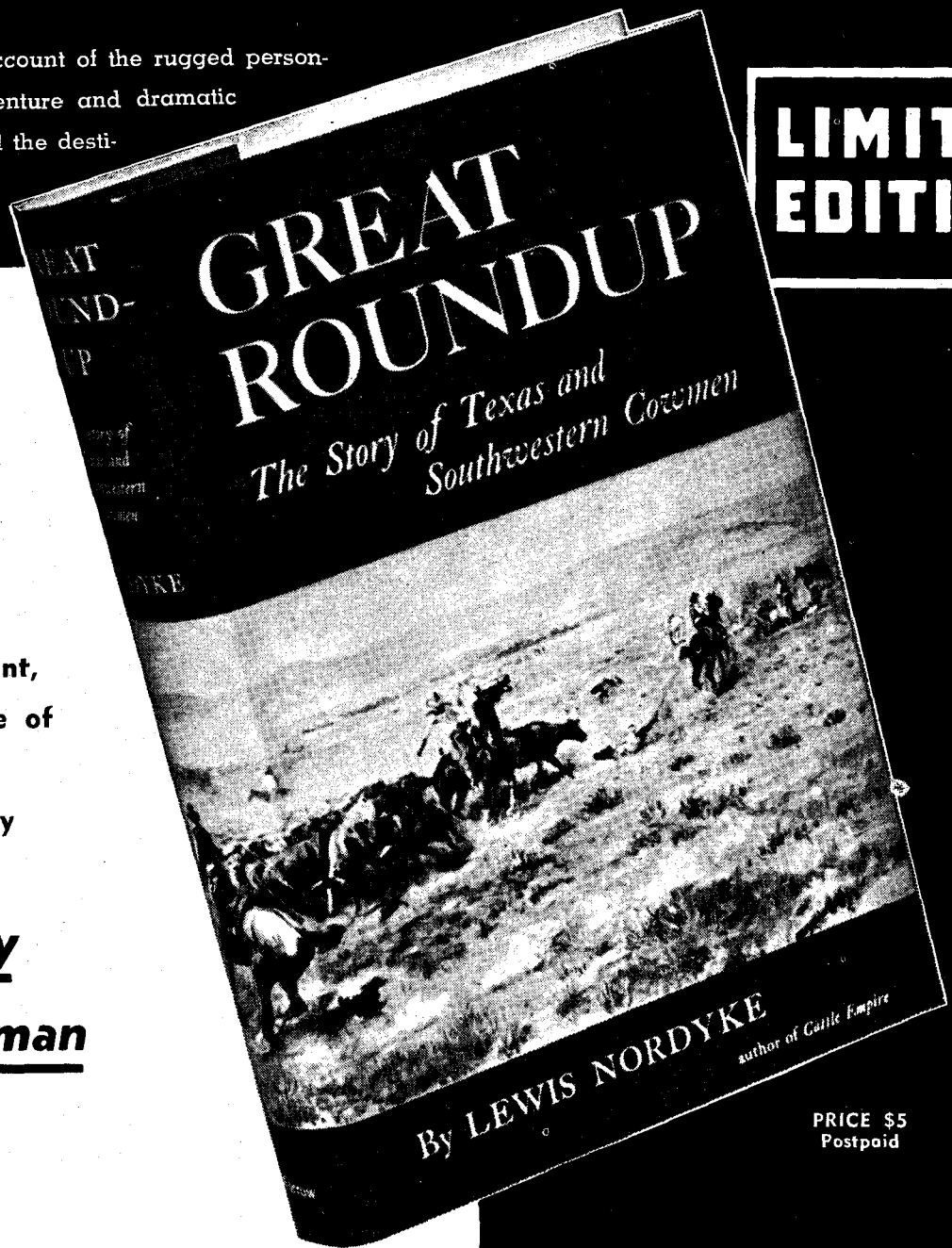

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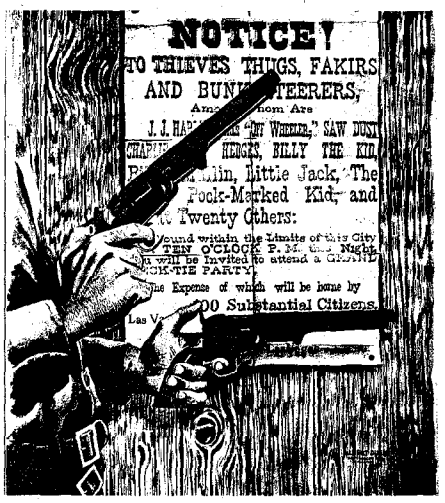
Coming Up!

In the next issue of TRUE WEST, we proudly present another double-length unique feature—FAMOUS OUTLAWS OF THE OLD WEST, by Ben D. Titsworth. You will remember Ben as the illustrator of many TW articles in the past, and he has illustrated this long article lavishly with his authentic drawings and rare photographs. You won't find slick professional writing in this bloody saga of Black Jack Ketchum and the dreaded Hole-in-the-Wall gang of outlaws, but you will find absolute, nerve-tingling realism certified by eye-witness accounts and contemporary newspaper reports. In no other magazine in the world would you find a feature like this one!



NEXT TRUE WEST COVER—By Albert Dueis

It has always been our contention that many great lawmen of the old West equalled or excelled the much-publicized Earps and Hickoks in the performance of their duty. Therefore, it is with particular pleasure that we publish H. M. Timmons' article "When Cooper Wright Met the Mob." Wright was a West Texas sheriff, not much more than cricket-size—until the chips were down. Then, suddenly, he loomed like a giant in the eyes of wrongdoers. You'll like Cooper Wright—and learn once more that mere size is never the measure of a man.

"A Man Called Bat," by TRUE WEST's Research Editor, Norman B. Wiltsey, is the fascinating story of Bat Masterson: buffalo hunter, Indian fighter, Army scout, frontier sheriff and many other things, winding up incredibly as a famous sports writer and editor on a big New York newspaper!

Moving along to Bob and Jan Young's article "Tilt with the Iron Horse," you will read a gripping account of the "Linen Duster Bandits" who harried Southern Pacific trains in California in the early 1890's.

The "Mine Story" for next issue is John Taylor's "How the Dutchman Got His Gold." Taylor, who runs the Superstition Mountain Pack Outfit making regular trips into the area of the Dutchman's Lost Mine, advances some new theories on the source of Jacob Walzer's treasure. You might not agree with John—but we'll guarantee you'll read his article.

In all the thrilling stories of a lone man's battles against overwhelming odds with which the history of the old West abounds, the story of Nate Champion stands out. One gun against fifty, he shot it out to the bitter end—and, amazingly—kept a diary of his last few hours on earth before the flames consuming his cabin drove him out to meet death unflinchingly.

For a change of pace and also something for our loyal lady fans, we present B. P. Sul-

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Whole No. 17

True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of the Real West

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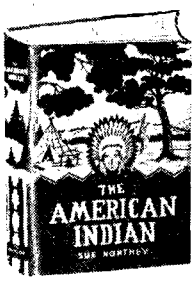

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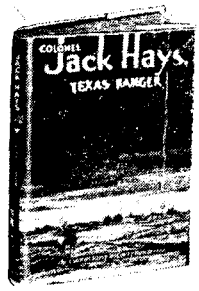

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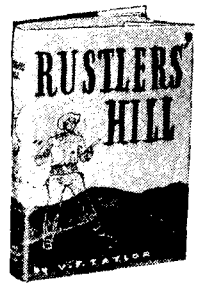

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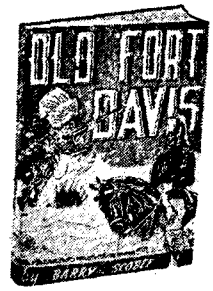

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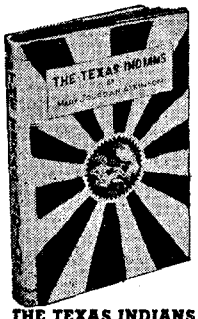

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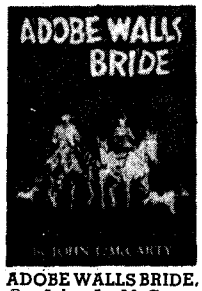

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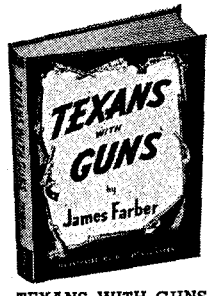

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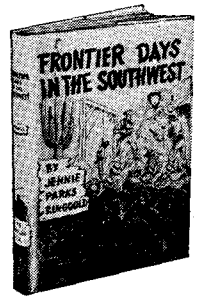

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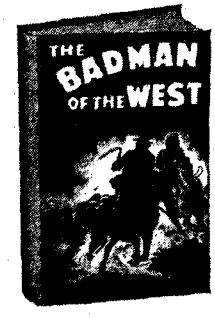

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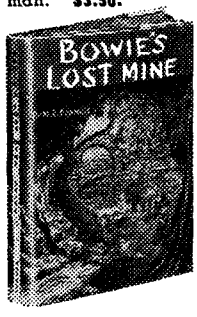

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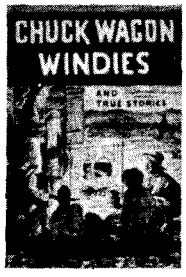

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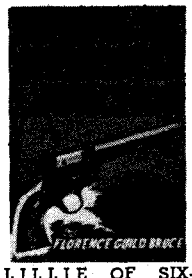

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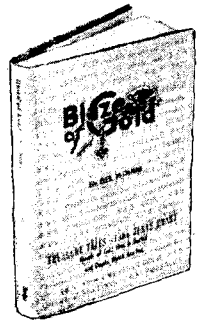

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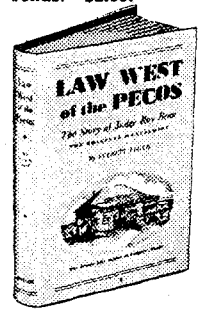

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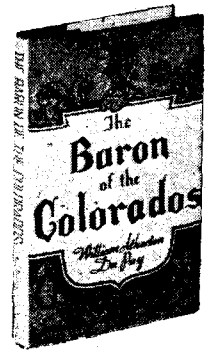

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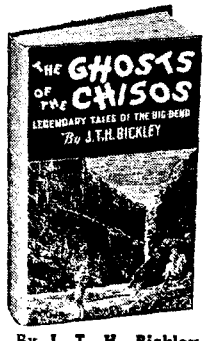

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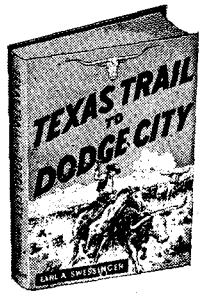

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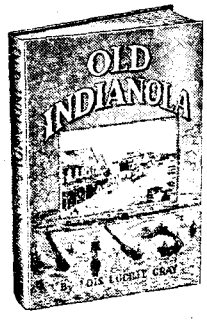

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LORDS OF THE SOUTH PLAINS

By Norman B. Wiltsey

EARLY in the 18th century, far-ranging French explorers encountered on the Great Plains a tribe of Indians called the Padoucas. Moving south and fighting the native Indians as they went, the Padoucas became known as the Comanches —a Ute appellation meaning Enemy. Originally the Utes also applied the term to the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and Kiowas, but after about 1726 the name was firmly affixed to the Padoucas alone. Of Shoshonean stock, the Comanches were also referred to in the universal sign language of the Plains Indians as the Snakes. The Shoshones proper were also called Snakes by other tribes and by the early mountain men and fur traders. The Comanches themselves ignored these various names, calling themselves simply *The People*—the tribal term being *Nerm* or *Nimma*.

The tribe was divided into bands. The Penetekas, or Honey Eaters, inhabited Texas during the later Spanish and the Anglo-American periods. Other tribal bands were the Yamparikas, or Root Eaters; the wild Kwahadis, or Antelopes, who inhabited the *Llano Estacado* (Staked Plain); and the Kotsotekas, or Buffalo Eaters. All Comanches ate buffalo meat, of course, but the Kotsotekas roamed the Canadian Valley, where buffaloes gathered in vast numbers; hence the name. These tribal divisions had no central government, and this loose setup often caused the Comanches to be charged unjustly with failure to keep their treaty obligations.

The Comanches were probably the first of the Plains tribes to obtain the horse. The Frenchman Bourgmont, visiting a Comanche village in Kansas in 1724, found the warriors amply equipped with horses. They informed him that they had obtained their mounts from the Spanish, far to the south. (They neglected to mention whether by raiding or through barter, and Bourgmont was smart enough not to ask.) These Comanches were already superb horsemen at the time of Bourgmont's visit—pretty conclusive proof that they had owned horses for years. Though the statement is disputed by some writers, the Comanches are generally rated as the best horsemen of all the Plains tribes. The artist Catlin, having seen most of the "horse Indians" in action, declared that the Comanches outclassed them all in daring horsemanship.

BY 1836, according to P. L. Chouteau, agent for the Osages, the Comanches were well established in a wide sweep of country, from the Arkansas River on the north to the Mexican settlements on the south, and from the Grand Cordillera on the west to the Cross Timbers on the east. Ernest Wallace and E. Adamson Hoebel, in their authoritative book, *The Comanches,* specifically placed Comancheria in the middle eighteenth century as "bounded on the north by the Arkansas River, on the west by a line extending from the headquarters of the Arkansas southward near the Mexican settlements of Taos and Santa Fe, on the southwest by the Pecos River, on the southeast by the white settlements in the vicinity of San Antonio, Fredericksburg, and Austin, and on the east by the Cross Timbers . . . an area more than six hundred miles

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from north to south and four hundred miles from east to west."

Kiowas, Kiowa-Apaches, Wichitas and Wacos shared this vast hunting ground with the Comanches, but against all other men, red or white, the hard-riding tribesmen held their land with savage possessiveness.

On the western reaches of this broad land, the *Llano Estacado* formed a vast natural barrier against the Spanish and Pueblo settlements of New Mexico. Comanche war parties struck at the settlements; then retreated across the Staked Plain, defying pursuit. South of Comancheria lay the rugged country of the Big Bend, and this served too as a natural barrier beween northern Mexico and Comanche land. The warriors swooped out of the Big Bend and raided the Mexican settlements for captives and horses. Mexican soldiers prudently refrained from trailing the fierce raiders into the bleak expanse of the Big Bend. It was a soft racket for the Comanches, and they worked it steadily for decades.

Varying their raid pattern occasionally, the Comanches hit the Texas settlements. Flitting like shadows out of the covering hills and breaks, savage warrior bands harried the settlements for years before the Texas Rangers, the Colt revolver, and the fast-dwindling buffalo herds formed the deadly combination of factors that put them out of business.

All this warlike activity began with the Comanches' acquisition of the horse. The date cannot be pinpointed, although most authorities agree that the tribesmen were capable horsemen as early as 1700. Before the arrival of the horse, the Comanches—like all Plains tribes—lived in settled villages near water and grew vegetables for food. The men hunted on foot, and the only way they could make a mass kill of buffaloes was to drive a number of the great beasts over a cliff. All this changed when the Comanches acquired the fabulous creature they solemnly named the "God-dog." Suddenly mobile, they could range far afield hunting the buffalo, raid other tribes or strike deep into Mexico. Wallace and Hoebel point out that "the horse provided both the means and the incentive for the Comanches' new and expanded way of life." They were the first exponents of the "horse culture" that was to spread to all the Plains tribes and convert them from settled agriculturists to roving hunters and raiders, and—in the words of admiring U.S. military officers—"the best light cavalry the world has ever seen."

Illustrated by Randy Steffen

The Comanches charged out of the smoke-filled draw.

THE Comanches became the wealthiest in horses of all the tribes, with some warriors owning hundreds. The question of how these horses originated has long puzzled historians, although it is considered probable that many were descended from stock stolen or strayed from the early Spanish explorers. Coronado and De Soto brought the first modern horses to the Plains before the middle of the sixteenth century, but there was little resemblance to the big Spanish horses in the wiry mustangs that later roamed the prairie in vast herds. George Bird Grinnell, in his book, *The Cheyenne Indians,* gives us a description of the corral method in universal use by the Plains tribes to capture wild horses. The stout enclosure, oval in shape, was usually situated in an opening in the scrubby blackjack timber frequented by the mustangs. The fence was a stockade formed of blackjack posts set close together on end, with brush and limbs of trees piled against the outside of the fence. The wide-spreading wings, made of brush, were heaped up so high and wide that a horse could neither see nor jump over them. Driven inside the corral, the horses were trapped.

The breaking of these mustangs was, by present-day standards, a brutal performance. The horse was first choked until he could no longer fight back, then thrown to the ground. The warrior doing the breaking then knelt by the helpless mustang's head and blew his breath into its nostrils. This strange ceremony was supposed to aid in the mustang's subjection. The brave then pulled the "wild hairs" from around the horse's eyes. A rawhide rope was looped around the lower jaw and tied about the neck, and the first harsh phase of the training was completed.

Trapping wild horses, however, was always secondary with the Comanches to stealing horses already broken. Why risk your neck rasseling a wild horse when you might deftly steal a horse already trained? That was the way the practical Comanches figured, and they quickly became the most accomplished horse thieves on the Plains. Colonel Richard I. Dodge, in his book, *The Plains of the Great West,* tells of a Comanche's extraordinary skill in stealing into an armed camp and making off with horses. A brave would creep soundlessly as a shadow into a "bivouac where a dozen men were sleeping, each with a horse tied to his wrist by a lariat, cut a rope within six feet of the sleeper, and get away without waking a soul."

Colonel Dodge further called the Comanches "the most cunning, the most mischievously artful of all the United States Indians."

A Comanche boy learned to ride as a small child and his training continued all the rest of his life, for he never stopped practicing until he could no longer straddle a horse. One trick of horsemanship which few white men were ever able to master, was the spectacular stunt of swinging over the "off" side of a mount in battle and using the horse's body as a shield. By hooking a leg over the horse's back, and hanging in a rope loop attached to his saddle or plaited into his horse's mane, the warrior had both hands free to use bow or rifle or to pick up a wounded comrade.

The Comanche warrior trained his horses with two objectives in mind: war and hunting. The war horse was picked for endurance and a level head under fire, the buffalo horse

"I would rather stay out on the plains and eat dung than live on the white man's reservation!" roared Voice-of-the-Sunrise, chief of the Yamparika Comanches. Brave words — but the blood-red sun setting behind the cottonwoods of the council place grimly symbolized the dark destiny of the Comanches.

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for speed in catching up with his quarry. A rawhide thong looped around the lower jaw—or, in some cases, merely the knee pressure of the rider—directed the buffalo horse. The hunter rode up on the selected quarry from behind, coming in fast at the side and usually aiming his arrow just back of the last rib. The shaft ranged forward and downward, toward the low-hanging heart. A good hunter on a good horse could often kill up to one hundred buffaloes a day in this manner. Lances were also used to kill the lumbering beasts.

IN warfare, the Comanche was unsurpassed. He fought the white man or his fellow Indians with equal ferocity. The Cheyennes, the Arapahoes, and the Apaches all fought the Comanches at various times or simultaneously. The Apaches, in particular, began fighting the Comanches around 1700 and continued the struggle intermittently for 170 years. In the strange manner of Indian wars, this situation did not prevent the separate hostile tribes from negotiating occasional peace treaties, which lasted sometimes for years.

By means of gifts and conciliation, the Spanish managed to co-exist pretty well with the Comanches. The fierce tribesmen stole horses and goods from the Spanish, and abducted women and children whenever they wished, but the apprehensive Dons seemed to consider it a small price to pay for even a shaky peace with the wild raiders. Appeasement was the order of the times; yet the Comanches raided at will.

About 1820, Anglo-Americans began pushing west in considerable numbers. Settlers moved into Texas, and the Comanches quickly became alarmed at seeing these hardy whites, so different from the Spanish, build cabins on their hunting grounds.

The next disturbing happening was the exile of the displaced Eastern Indians to the west. The angry Comanches threatened to kill any Eastern Indians caught poaching on their hunting grounds. The U.S. Government took the Comanche threat seriously, and decided to try to pacify them. Sam Houston, a Government agent, was sent in 1832 to discuss peace with the disgruntled tribesmen. The council was held at San Antonio. Nothing concrete in the way of a treaty was accomplished, however. In 1835, another council was held and this time the Comanches agreed to share their hunting grounds with the Eastern tribes. Citizens of the United States were to be permitted to pass and repass through Comanche country without molestation, and restitution was to be made by either party of property stolen from the other. This was certainly a fine-sounding treaty. There was only one flaw to be found in it—it never worked. Both sides quickly forgot their pledged word, and the Comanche-Anglo-American treaty of 1835 became just another scrap of paper.

Comanche raids upon the Texas settlements started up worse than ever. On May 19, 1836, a war party of Kiowas and Comanches attacked Fort Parker on the headwaters of the Navasota River in Limestone County in northern Texas. The settlers fell for the flag of truce trick, and allowed the Indians inside the fort. Nearly forty whites were killed in the ensuing massacre. The Indians carried off Cynthia Ann Parker and her two-year-old brother, John. Rachel Plummer and her two-year-old son were also captured in this raid.

The massacre at Fort Parker spurred Texas officials into action. Major Le Grand visited the northern Comanches to negotiate a treaty with them. He met with the chiefs, smoked with them, gave them presents—and then watched them walk out of the council when he proposed signing a treaty. President Sam Houston, of the Texas Republic, then sought to institute a system of regulated trade with the Comanches. "Even a Comanche won't fight if he can get the things he wants," argued Houston. Sam's theory was practical, but the Texas Congress did not agree. The lawmakers ignored Houston's suggestion and hurried to enact laws to "protect the frontier." The laws failed to function and the intermittent raiding continued.

TREATIES were made and treaties broken during the next four years. On March 19, 1840, twelve Comanche chiefs met with Texas commissioners at Bexar. The council began with angry denunciations on both sides and ended in a savage fight between troops and warriors. Nearly forty braves were killed, including the twelve chiefs. The Comanches fled, carrying off their wounded and vowing vengeance. Sharp raids on outlying settlements followed during the summer. The village of Linnville, deep on the Gulf Coast, was destroyed in one of these attacks.

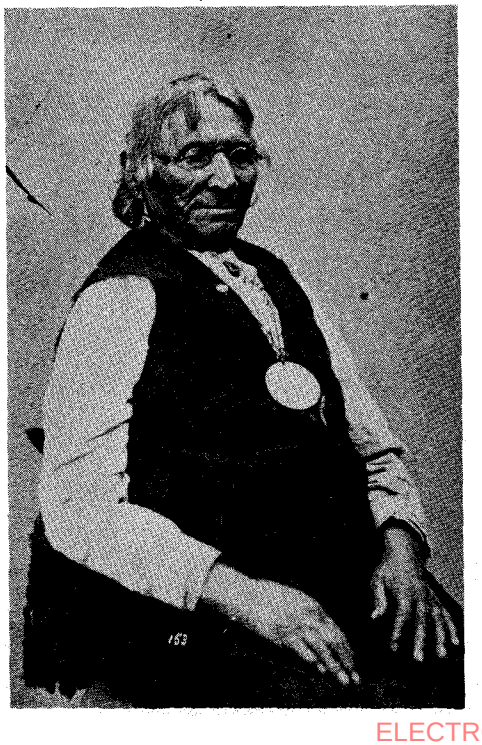
Shortly after the Linnville tragedy, the Texas Congress passed a law authorizing President Mirabeau B. Lamar to "appoint and commission three persons to raise Ranger companies." Jack Hayes, who was to become the hated nemesis of the Comanches, was one of the three. Little "Captain Jack" led a force of 120 men against an estimated 1,000 Comanches and whipped them to a standstill in one of the most amazing battles in frontier history. Thirty Rangers were killed in the fight, but several hundred Comanches fell in the day-long struggle. The discouraged Indians withdrew at nightfall, leaving the Texans in command of the field. Never again did the Comanches raise such a force to fight the white men.

Later, at Plum Creek, Jack Hayes and his Rangers for the first time in history used the Colt revolver in warfare. Twenty-six Rangers, armed with .34 caliber Paterson Colts, whipped one hundred Comanches in a sizzling scrap. This fight has been called an "epic milestone in Plains warfare." Mounted Indians, armed with bows and lances, never again held the advantage over mounted white men armed only with muzzle-loading firearms.

But the Comanches learned their lesson the hard way. In 1844 they were still trying to beat the Rangers at their own bloody game. On June 8, the "little white devil" Jack Hayes and fifteen Rangers were involved in another incredible scrap in the Pedernales River country. Hayes and his handful of men holed up on a brushy hilltop and waited

Left: Ten Bears, noted chief and great orator of the Comanches, at the age of 80. Center: Lone Wolf, fierce Kiowa chief who fought Colonel Mackenzie in the Battle of Palo Duro Canyon. Right: Comanche sub-chief, name unknown.

Courtesy The Smithsonian Institution



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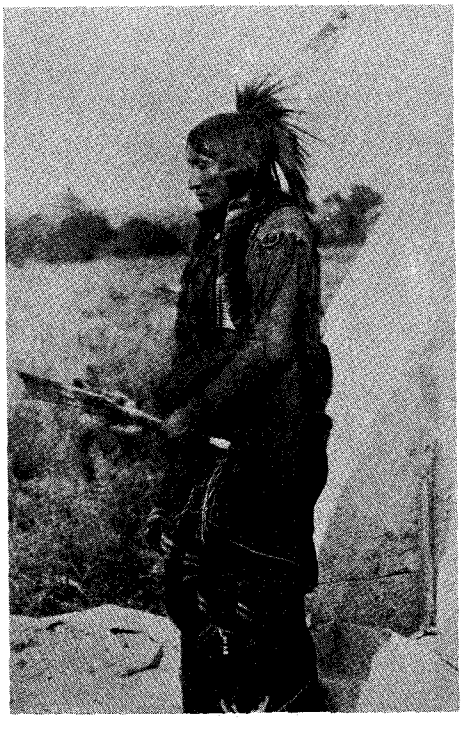

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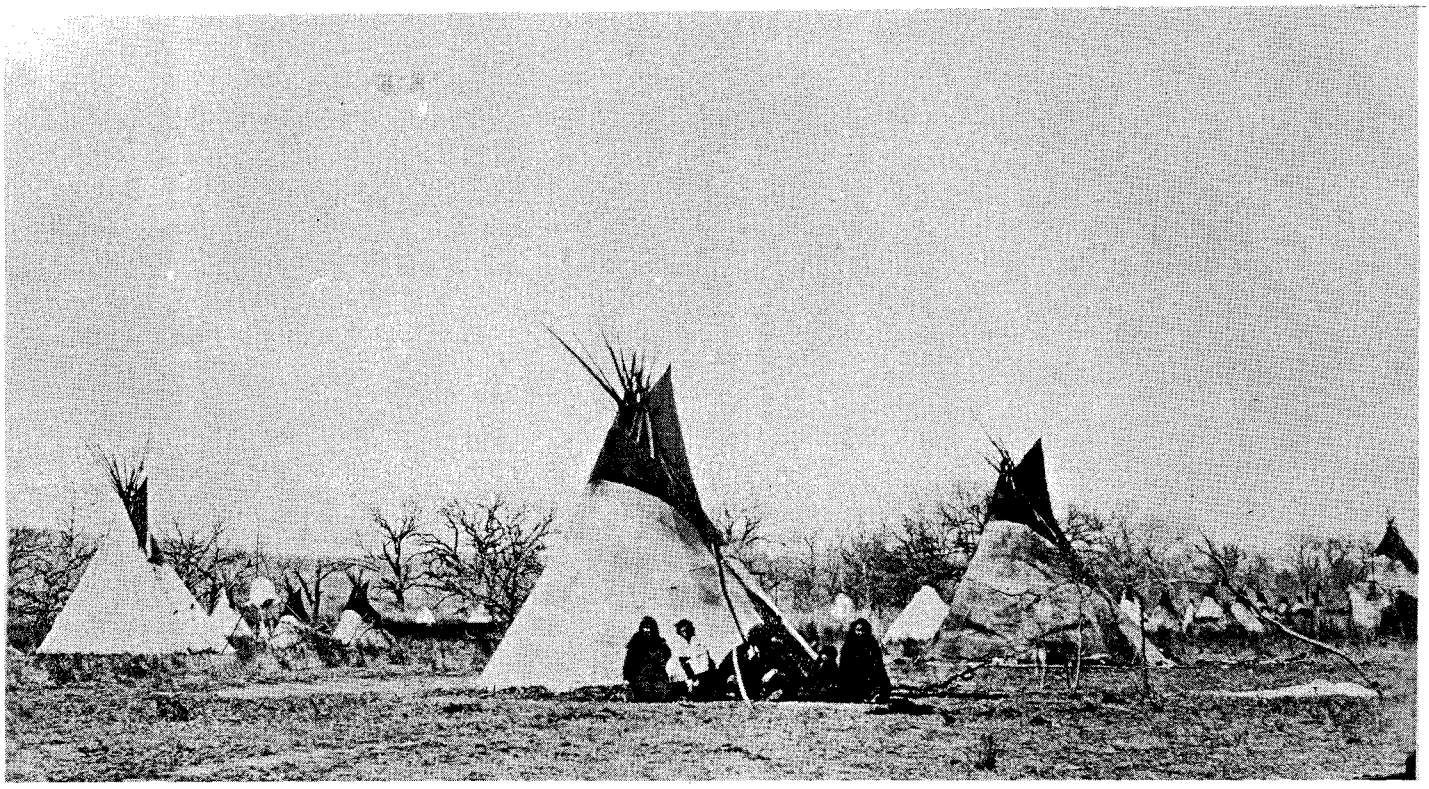

Mow-way (or Hand-Shaker's) camp. Courtesy The Smithsonian Institution

calmly while the large Comanche war party circled them at the gallop, firing arrows and insults. Finally they charged. The sixteen Rangers fired a volley from their rifles into the mass of oncoming warriors, then mounted their horses and charged in turn, their "five-shooters" blazing. (The cylinder of the Colt Paterson carried five cap-and-ball loads.)

The resultant shock to the Comanches was more psychological than deadly, for this particular band apparently had never heard of the white man's "Many shots" guns. A. J. Sowell, author of *Early Settlers and Indian Fighters in Southwest Texas,* wrote:

"Never was a band of Indians more surprised than at this charge. They expected the Rangers to remain on the defense and to finally wear them out and exhaust their ammunition. . . . In vain the Comanches tried to turn their horses and make a stand, but such was the wild confusion of running horses, popping pistols and yelling Rangers that they abandoned the idea of a rally and sought safety in flight."

The Rangers pursued the Indians for more than three miles. Sowell quoted a Comanche chieftain as saying that he never wanted to fight Jack Hayes and his Rangers again, as they had a "shot for every finger on the hand."

DISCOURAGED by the suddenly increased fire-power of the Texans, the Comanches became wary of attacking them. Mexico was still a wide-open target for raids, however, and they redoubled their activities in that direction. Below the border they stole cattle and horses and brought them north to sell to white traders. What with incessantly raiding the Mexicans and fighting off the sudden influx of Eastern Indians upon their hunting grounds, the Comanches were busy enough. The Government had moved hundreds of partly civilized Indians from their homes east of the Mississippi to new homes along the eastern borders of the Great Plains. Delawares, Shawnees, Seminoles, Cherokees, and Kickapoos—all came to the wide-flung prairie to resume their old trade of hunting. These invaders from the East were mighty fighters, as the Plains tribes quickly discovered.

In the spring of 1853, fifteen hundred Comanches, Osages, Apaches, Kiowas, Arapahoes, and Cheyennes united for the sole purpose of killing all the Eastern Indians on the Plains. One hundred Sauk and Fox warriors met this huge war party in battle near the Kansas River and whipped them soundly. The Sauk and Fox braves employed military tactics they had learned from the white soldiers. Each of the Eastern warriors was armed with a good rifle and each was a good shot. They formed into a double line facing the Western Indians, and after the men in the first line had fired their rifles, they dropped behind the second line to reload before stepping forward to protect their mates after they in turn had fired. Faced with such discipline and marksmanship, the great allied war party suffered a humiliating defeat and heavy losses. The Eastern tribesmen lost only six of their number.

1858 marked the beginning of the end for the Comanches as a free people. They were hit hard on May 12 of that year when a force of 102 Texas Rangers and 113 Indian scouts attacked a village of seventy lodges north of the Canadian River on Little Robe Creek. Seventy-six warriors were killed and the village utterly destroyed in the fight. Among the Comanche slain was Chief Iron Jacket, famed for his coat of Spanish mail, which was supposed to be impervious to rifle fire. A Tonkawa scout, using a large caliber rifle with a heavy charge of powder, put a slug through the ancient mail coat, to finish off Iron Jacket and explode the myth of his invulnerability to bullets.

THREE times in 1858 the Comanches were badly beaten in battles with the whites before the disordered remnants of the tribe fled to the Agency on the Arkansas to sue for peace. Here they huddled in despair, dully accepting whatever food and clothing the white officials handed out. Yet—and this was always the exasperating problem with the Comanches—even while the older men humbly begged food for their women and children, the wild young braves were out raiding the white settlements. Small, hard-riding war parties of from ten to thirty warriors attacked settlements all the way from the Red River to Corpus Christi. These savage raids made it difficult for the settlers to accept any Indians as friendly, and the peaceful reservation Indians paid dearly for the depredations of the hostiles. In 1859, the bedeviled Government removed the "friendlies" to a tract of land near Anadarko in the Leased District—land which had been leased from the Choctaws and Chickasaws. The raids by the hostiles continued.

The onset of the Civil War in 1861 found both sides courting the Comanches. The chiefs signed treaties with both Federals and Confederates, according to which side had the most presents to offer. Sometimes one chief signed three or four different treaties with as many different emissaries of the two Great White Fathers in Richmond and Washington. To the Comanches, the white men were all crazy anyhow—and this silly business of TWO supreme white chiefs only proved it all over again.

The Civil War afforded the Comanches a breathing spell. The departure of the garrisons from frontier military posts for far-off battlefields soon halted the invasion of emigrants into Comanche hunting grounds. Relieved of the double pressure of troops and emigrants, the warriors took things easy for the duration of the war. They became expert cadgers, deftly wangling food and supplies from both sides. They did nothing to prepare themselves for the renewed surge of emigrants after the war was over, and angrily took to raiding settlements and attacking wagon trains again. Raiding and skirmishing went on until the Government commissioners met with the Comanches, Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas, and Kiowa-Apaches in the great treaty council at Medicine Lodge in Kansas in 1867.

This treaty council, like the famous 1851 council with the northern Plains

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tribes at Fort Laramie, was hopefully designed by the white men to "wipe war forever from the prairie." Held on the bank of the Arkansas River seventy miles south of Fort Larned, it was the last of the picturesque "Grand Councils" ever held on the Plains.

Many noted frontiersmen and scouts attended the vast gathering. Jesse Chisholm was there, and the famed frontier trader, George Bent. Aging Black Beaver, the great Delaware scout and guide, watched the proceedings, with never a smile or show of emotion on his somber face. The Beaver, the sorry remnant of whose people had been driven westward from their beloved eastern forests, must have thought long, dark thoughts as he observed the white men smooth-talking his red brothers. The scene was a familiar and bitter one to the Delaware; he had heard the white man talk in council many times and the theme of his speech was always the same: "Give us your lands and get out!"

THE commissioners arrived in Army ambulances in the center of a large wagon train protected by five hundred soldiers. Several newspaper reporters accompanied the train, and one of these—Alfred A. Taylor, who later became Governor of Tennessee—wrote a graphic description of the colorful maneuvers with which the Indians greeted the train.

". . . Thousands of mounted warriors could be seen concentrating and forming themselves into a wedge-shaped mass, the edge of the wedge pointing toward us. In this sort of mass formation, with all their war paraphernalia, their horses striped with war paint, the riders bedecked with war bonnets and their faces painted red, came charging in full speed toward our column . . .

" . . . When within a mile of the head of our procession, the wedge, without hitch or break, quickly threw itself into the shape of a huge ring or wheel without hubs or spokes, whose rim consisted of five distinct lines of these wild, untutored, yet inimitable horsemen. This ring, winding around and around with the regularity and precision of well-oiled machinery, approached nearer and nearer to us with every revolution. Reaching within a hundred yards of us at breakneck speed, the giant wheel or ring ceased to turn and suddenly came to a standstill."

This spectacular performance, in the nature of psychological warfare, was shrewdly designed by the allied tribesmen to be a "test of the white man's good faith." If any soldier had lost his nerve at the crucial moment and fired a shot in panic, the disastrous result would have been instant battle.

Satanta, Kiowa chief, spoke first. Representing himself as a man of peace, Satanta reminded the commissioners that the Indians were hunters and warriors—not farmers, like the white settlers. Claiming all the country south of the Arkansas for the Kiowas and their allies, the chief spurned all suggestions of soldiers' camps, "medicine lodges" (hospitals), reservations and houses for the Indians.

"This building homes for us is all nonsense; we don't want you to build any for us," Satanta cried. "We would all die! Look at the Penetekas. Formerly they were powerful, but now they are weak and poor." (The Penetekas had endured contact with the whites longer than any other division of the Comanche Nation.) "I want all my land, even from the Arkansas south to the Red River. My country is small enough already. If you build us houses, the land will be smaller. Why do you insist on this? What good can come of it? I don't understand your reason. Time enough to build us houses when the buffaloes are all gone. . . . Tell the Great Father (the President) that there are plenty of buffaloes yet, and when the buffaloes are all gone, *I* will tell him. This trusting to the agents for my food I don't believe in."

Ten Bears, chief of the Yamparika division of the Comanches, spoke for the Comanche Nation and for its allies as well. The chief rose and stood looking out over the mighty assemblage of his race for a long moment, as if he realized that never again would there be such a vast gathering of free Indians upon the Plains. Finally he raised his right hand and impressively delivered a speech that has been acclaimed as one of the most splendid examples of Indian oratory in the long history of the Red Man, ranking with the speeches of Logan, Tecumseh, and the noble Seneca, Red Jacket. The sonorous voice of Ten Bears rolled out over his rapt audience "like the majestic tones of an open diapason organ stop," as one awed young newspaper reporter wrote to his paper. The speech itself richly deserves repeating word for word:

"MY heart is filled with joy when I see you here, as the brooks fill with water when the snows melt in the spring; and I feel glad as the ponies do when the fresh grass starts in the beginning of the year. I heard of your coming when I was many sleeps away, and I made but few camps when I met you. I knew that you had come to do good to me and my people. I looked for benefits which would last forever, and so my face shines with joy as I look upon you. My people have never first drawn a bow or fired a gun against the whites. There has been trouble on the line between us, and my young men have danced the war dance. But it was not begun by us. It was you who sent out the first soldier and we who sent out the second. Two years ago, I came up upon this road, following the buffalo, that my wives and children might have their cheeks plump and their bodies warm. But the soldiers fired on us, and since that time there has been a noise like that of a thunder storm, and we have not known which way to go. So it was upon the Canadian. Nor have we been made to cry once alone. The blue-dressed soldiers and the Utes came from out of the night when it was dark and still, and for camp-fires they lit our lodges. Instead of hunting game they killed my braves and the warriors of the tribe cut short their hair for the dead. So it was in Texas. They made sorrow come in our camps, and we went out like the buffalo bulls when the cows are attacked. When we found them we killed them, and their scalps hang in our lodges. The Comanches are not weak and blind like the pups of a dog when seven sleeps old. They are strong and far-sighted, like grown horses. We took their road and we went on it. The white women cried and our women laughed.

"But there are things which you have

Cynthia Ann Parker, and baby "Prairie Flower," the mother and sister of Chief Quanah Parker.
Frontier Pix

Quanah Parker, Chief of the Kwahadi Comanches.
Frontier Pix

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said to me which I did not like. They were not sweet like sugar, but bitter like gourds. You said that you wanted to put us upon a reservation, to build us houses and make us medicine lodges. I do not want them. I was born upon the prairie, where the wind blew free and there was nothing to break the light of the sun. I was born where there were no enclosures and where everything drew a free breath. I want to die there and not within walls. I know every stream and every wood between the Rio Grande and the Arkansas. I have hunted and lived over that country. I lived like my fathers before me and like them I lived happily.

"When I was at Washington (Ten Bears had visited the nation's capital in 1865) the Great Father told me that all the Comanche land was ours, and that no one should hinder us in living upon it. So why do you ask us to leave the rivers, and the sun, and the wind, and live in houses? Do not ask us to give up the buffalo for the sheep. The young men have heard talk of this, and it has made them sad and angry. Do not speak of it more. I love to carry out the talk I get from the Great Father. When I get goods and presents I and my people feel glad, since it shows that he holds us in his eye.

"If the Texans had kept out of my country, there might have been peace. But that which you now say we must live on is too small. The Texans have taken away the places where the grass grew the thickest and the timber was best. Had we kept that, we might have done the things you ask. But it is too late. The white man has the country which we loved, and we only wish to wander on the prairie until we die. Any good thing you say to me shall not be forgotten. I shall carry it as near to my heart as my children, and it shall be as often on my tongue as the name of the Great Father. I want no blood upon my land to stain the grass. I want it all clear and pure, and I wish it so that all who go through among my people may find peace when they come in and leave it when they go out."

TEN BEARS' speech was a futile gesture, as in his heart he must have known it would be. The relentless tide of white expansion westward was set in motion against the red man and his ancient way of life, and there was no saving him from being overwhelmed by it. The gulf between the Stone Age and the Steam Age was bridgeless; the people of each could not understand the other.

Hopelessly, the Comanche and Kiowa chiefs signed the treaty providing the exact things they had said they did not want—houses, farms, agricultural tools, "medicine lodges," and military posts. There was nothing else they could do. It was either sign the treaty or fight the soldiers; unlike the Eastern tribes who had been pushed westward into Comanche country, the Comanches and their allies had no place left to go. The blood-red sun setting behind the cottonwoods of the council place grimly symbolized the dark destiny of the Comanches.

The Kwahadis, the Comanches of the *Llano Estacado,* were the last division of the tribe to bow to the white man's yoke. Roaming about in the remote depths of the Staked Plain, the Kwahadis lived by hunting and by stealing stock from the ranchers and settlers of Texas and Arkansas. Mexican traders from New Mexico, called *Comancheros,* brought them goods to exchange for the stolen stock. Whiskey, guns, and ammunition were eagerly sought by the Kwahadis. Clinton Smith, a white boy held captive in the camps of the Kwahadis, later wrote of the frenzied trading that took place when a party of *Comancheros* arrived with goods:

". . . Those fool Indians would let the Mexicans pick their mules for a keg of whiskey; ten pounds of coffee was accepted for a pack horse, five pounds of tobacco would get a mule, and a buffalo robe would be exchanged for little or nothing. The traders stayed with us two or three weeks. The only way the Indians would let them come into camp was with packs loaded down on jacks, but they would let them take back (presumably after they were drunk) what they had traded to them."

It is impossible to estimate the number of cattle and other livestock stolen by the Kwahadis over the years of white settlement in the Southwest, but the toll must have been tremendous. Noted rancher Charles Goodnight believed that at least 300,000 head of Texas cattle had been stolen and sold or traded to New Mexicans during the Civil War period alone. Goodnight, who had lost 600 cattle in one raid, may have overestimated the losses, but in any case they were heavy and continuous from about 1850 to 1873.

GRADUALLY, under pressure from the irate ranchers and from the Army, the crafty *Comancheros* were forced to cut down on their lucrative trading operations with the Kwahadis. Feeling the pinch, the Staked Plain Comanches moved in to the agencies and demanded food and presents. The operations of the *Cómancheros* dwindled rapidly and finally ceased altogether.

The agencies, lacking sufficient supplies for their own Indians, refused to give anything to the Kwahadis. The band trailed back into the Staked Plain and resumed raiding outlying ranches as before.

In 1871, the Army began sending expeditions into the *Llano Estacado* to "punish" the Kwahadis for their misdeeds. Colonel R. S. Mackenzie moved out from Fort Richardson on August 19 to attack the Comanches holed up in the rugged canyons on the eastern border of the Staked Plain. After reorganizing and training for field duty at Camp Cooper, the command was ready for action October 1. Mackenzie, with six hundred men, entered Comanche country early in October.

The Kwahadis struck first, attacking Mackenzie at night on the Fresh Water Fork of the Brazos. The daring Comanches rode right into camp and stampeded his horse herd, making off with seventy head. Mackenzie pursued the raiders and hit them near the mouth of Blanco Canyon. The Comanches, ably directed by their half-breed chief Quanah Parker, son of Cynthia Ann Parker, held off the troops until the women and children escaped. The Kwahadis withdrew onto the plains, where Mackenzie lost contact with them in a bitter norther. Mackenzie trailed back to Fort Richardson, disconsolate.

The muddled Indian situation con-

Ranald S. Mackenzie, Colonel Fourth Cavalry; famed frontier Indian fighter.

Frontier Pix

Captain Jack Hayes, whose Texas Rangers demoralized age-old Comanche fighting methods with the Colt revolver.

Frontier Pix

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tinued to worsen. Indians who had kept their pledged treaty word and come into reservations to live, were disgruntled because they did not receive the goods and treatment promised them. The wild bands continued to stay off the reservations and raise hell whenever the mood hit them. On July 25, 1872, a unique all-Indian council was held on the prairie in the hope that some solution could be worked out. Cherokees, Seminoles, Creeks, Delawares, Comanches, Apaches, Caddoes, Wichitas, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes attended. Eloquent speeches were made. Colonel John Jumper, a "white" Indian, exhorted the tribesmen to be brothers to each other and to live at peace with all men: "When God created man on the earth, he made the *red* and the *white* and the *black;* the Creator is one, He made all, and if we live in peace He will love us all."

Old Black Beaver, who had seen so much of tragedy in his long lifetime, arose to plead with his Indian brothers to behave themselves and to act like men instead of children. He reminded them that the buffaloes were going fast, and that when they were gone, the Indian was doomed unless he "took the white men's road."

A band of Kiowas, under Lone Wolf and White Horse, came whooping in to the council. Encouraged by the presence of these fierce allies, a spokesman for the Yamparika Comanches declared scornfully: "If the delegates here from the civilized tribes are representative men, we have but little respect for them, they are old and dirty . . . hardly capable of managing their own affairs. . . . We have heard enough of their talk . . . we don't want to hear these *White Indians* any more."

THE Kiowa chiefs then spoke, electrifying their audience by bragging boldly about the raids they had made on the whites. Ten Bears made a speech next, but the great orator of the Comanches seemed tired and discouraged and his words carried no conviction. The council broke up on a note of discord and failure.

The scattered tribesmen were called together on September 6, 1872, in another in the interminable series of councils with the white men, at Leeper's Creek, six miles up the Washita from the Wichita agency. A reporter for the *New York Herald* described the meeting in this manner:

"Fronting the table were the Yampa-ri-ko Comanches: Ten Bears, Iron Mountain, Little Crow, Gap-in-the-Woods; and close by them Chewing Elk or Quirto-Quip. To the right of these sat, smoking the pipe of peace, the representatives of the Arapahoes: Little Raven, Big Mouth, Yellow Bear, Left Hand, Spotted Wolf, Curley, White Crow, Yellow Horse and Little Neck, and on their extreme left Mrs. Keith, the half-breed, who lives with them and acts as their interpreter. . . . Opposite the Arapahoes, on the left of the table and on the outer edge of the circle of chiefs, sat Pacer, chief of the Apaches; Tawhaw, head medicine man, and seven minor dignitaries of that tribe: Horseback, Milky Way, Mow-way and Black Beaver, of the Delawares (an old man, nearly white, and famous as the guide of Audubon), and Wah-Saupie (Guadalupe) second chief of the Caddoes. George Washington, an old, shrewd and well-to-do man, of dark complexion and gaudy dress, occupied a log in the right foreground, and near him sat Interpreters Jones and McCluskey (Philip McCusker), Agents Richards and Miles. Your Commissioner sat at the table. This was the position at the moment. Very shortly after, the bushes were parted and young warriors galloped up, and dismounting formed a second and third circle; and then a party of Kiowas under Running Bear . . . strode up and took position under a shady oak. . ."

Captain Henry Alvord opened the council by telling the Indians bluntly that the Great Father was angry with them for their raiding and misconduct of recent months. In the words of the Great Father, "the good Indians will be well fed and well treated, but the bad Indians will be punished."

With that undiplomatic opening, Alvord sat down. Milky Way, of the Penetekas, arose and reminded the Captain that "Washington's" agents had not kept their word to the Indians. Alvord ignored the complaint, declaring sharply that the Government was through dawdling and would henceforth sternly punish both raiding Indians and their friends and protectors.

Voice-of-the-Sunrise, a chief of the Yamparika Comanches, roared in reply: ". . . I have kept out on the plains because the whites were bad. Now you (Alvord) come here to do good, you say, and yet the first thing you do is to pen us up in a narrow territory. I would rather stay out on the plains and eat dung than come in on such conditions! . . . I was on the war path but now I am not. . . . I don't want to hear such talk about having me penned up on a reservation."

The talks continued, but their tenor remained the same; the "white Indians" pleading with the "out" bands to come in and the Comanches insisting that they would never come in to live on the reservations. Old Ten Bears injected a note of sardonic humor into the proceedings by suggesting that, since the United States Government had moved the Indians so often with such poor results, it might try moving the Texans. Shortly thereafter the council broke up. Tangible results were few, consisting of the surrender of some stolen stock and a few captives by the Indians, and a temporary improvement in the conduct of the wild prairie bands.

The vast assemblage of Indians and white men was silent as Ten Bears began his speech.

THROUGHOUT the early 1870's the same pattern was repeated over and over: the Indians came into the reservations during the cold winter months for rations, and moved back on the prairie in spring to hunt and raid as they had always done. The buffaloes were rapidly disappearing under the steady barrage of the white hide hunters; yet the Comanches and Kiowas refused to believe that their wild, roving way of life was about finished. As other tribes had done in times of great stress, the Comanches and Kiowas turned to a powerful medicine man, a spiritual leader, to bring back the old days with his mighty medicine.

Ishatai (Coyote Droppings), a young medicine man seemingly possessed of hypnotic powers, convinced the tribal leaders that he had "ascended above the clouds, where he had communed with the Great Spirit." He claimed, in addition to being bullet-proof himself, the ability to bullet-proof all who believed in his powers. Amazingly, Ishatai was also a clever—or lucky—weather prophet and astronomer. He predicted that a comet flaring over the Southwest early in 1873 would disappear in five days. It vanished on the fifth day. He also announced that a severe summer-long drouth would follow the disappearance of the comet. The drouth followed precisely on schedule. All in all, he was just the man to influence the disillusioned Comanches

(Continued on page 30)

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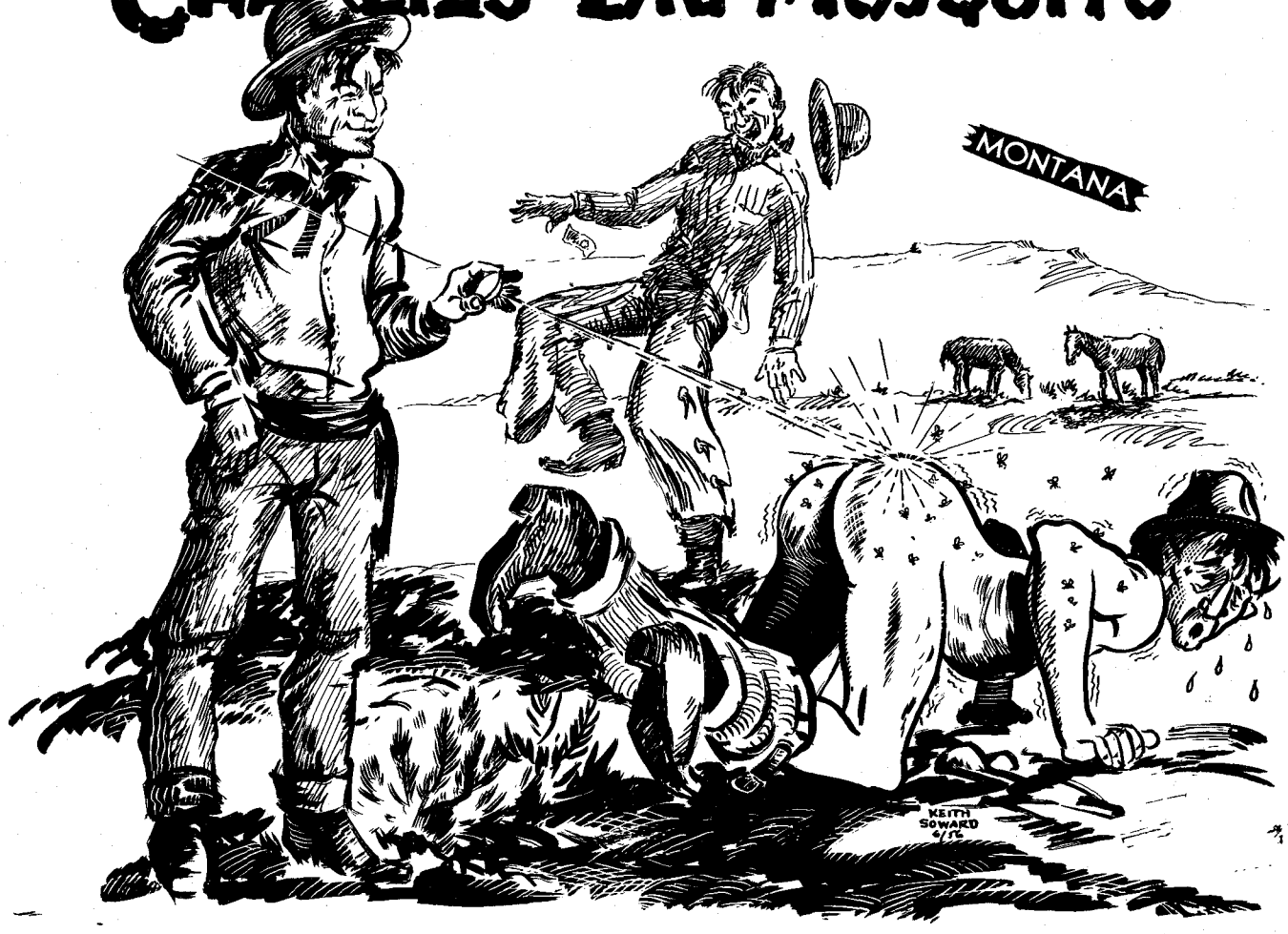
CHARLIE'S BIG MOSQUITO



With his last twenty dollars fading fast, Charlie Russell had to take drastic action.

By Walter W. Raleigh

Illustrated by Keith Soward

CHARLIE RUSSELL told me this yarn in the California Wine House at Helena, Montana, where many of his paintings were purchased and exhibited.

Charlie and his partner, Track Huston, had been in Great Falls bucking the tiger and hitting the redeye. When luck went against them and their bankroll ran low, they figured it was time they saddled their horses and rode. Maybe at the next place Lady Luck would look on them with more favor.

Tired and hungry, they made their first camp in the Missouri River bottom. Charlie knew the mosquitoes would be bad there, but—as whiskey-parched as their throats were—he figured they'd better camp close to water.

They'd built up a fire and were fixing to rustle a little grub, when they spotted another man pitching camp not far away. Charlie watched the man a while and concluded he was a tenderfoot. Tenderfeet were legitimate prey in Montana at that time, and Charlie's fertile brain hatched a plan.

"Track," he said, "I figure our luck has changed. I think the golden opportunity to increase our bankrolls has arrived. Let's mosey over and see if we can interest this fellow in a little game of poker."

They waited politely until the stranger had eaten, hobbled out his horses, and begun the maddening job of trying to kill nine million mosquitoes determined to drain his last drop of blood.

It was that mosquito fight that gave Charlie an even better idea than engaging the greenhorn in a game of chance. His new idea didn't require any skill or luck. He explained it to Track, who agreed enthusiastically that it was sheer genius. Accordingly, the boys strolled over and got acquainted.

While they talked, Charlie and Track maintained such complete indifference to the swarms of blood-sucking mosquitoes that the stranger was impressed. He wanted to know how they could endure such punishment.

"Why," said Charlie, "to live out here, stranger, you have to grow a hide as tough as a bull's. There's old-timers around here who keep rattlesnakes for pets. Nobody but a tenderfoot pays any attention to little things like mosquito bites."

Off to a good start, Charlie kept making other remarks detrimental to tenderfeet. These cracks, coupled with the annoyance of the mosquitoes, soon had the tenderfoot on the prod.

"Why, damn you!" he finally swore, "I can take anything any bowlegged cowpuncher can take!"

THIS was just what Charlie had been building the stranger up to, so he slipped it to him. He offered to bet twenty dollars that the stranger couldn't strip and lie face down on the ground for three minutes, without squirming.

The tenderfoot took him up; the money was put on the line. The stranger stripped, put his watch on the ground, and lay down beside it. Charlie stood back, watching the black swarm of mosquitoes that instantly covered the naked tenderfoot, and kept time with his own watch.

Two minutes went by, with no apparent weakening of the stranger. Charlie could see his last twenty fading fast. He had to do something. And that's when he thought of the sunglass he always packed in his pocket to kindle fires in case he ran out of matches.

Quickly, he slipped the sunglass from his pocket. Holding it at the correct angle to catch the sunlight, he focused the concentrated rays on the only spot of the stranger's anatomy not yet covered by mosquitoes.

The trick paid off. One tiny spot on the tenderfoot's skin was all but smoking before his agony became unbearable. "Partner," he groaned, "I've got only thirty seconds to go, but I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll split the bet with you if you'll let me knock that damned hornet off my rump!"

Charlie, deciding that half a loaf was better than none, hastily agreed, and slipped the sunglass into his pocket.

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DOES THE LOST SAN SABA MINE REALLY EXIST?

By John A. Masters

TEXAS

From the long-gone days of the Spanish Padres, the words "San Saba Mine" have held an irresistible lure for treasure hunters.

MY business is running logs on drill holes for the oil industry. I have a degree in geology, and about seven years experience in providing a vital service in the oil business. During those seven years, I have seen enough freebooters, promoters, and confidence artists to develop a fair ability to spot them on sight. The oil business is a risky venture at best, being possessed of the potentialities of making you immensely rich on one hand, or costing you your shirt on the other. Such a deal is bound to attract a flock of get-rich-quick hopefuls, as well as the sharpsters willing to help the hopefuls dispose of their bankrolls. I see both kinds.

When the door to my office opened and the secretary ushered in four persons, I unconsciously from long habit sized them up. My first quick impression was that these men were likely legitimate operators, and, as such, merited my courteous attention.

One of the group acted as spokesman. After all were seated, he squirmed uncomfortably for a second, grinned sheepishly, lit a cigarette, and started to talk.

"Can you locate metal with your log?" he asked.

Thinking he probably had lost some drill pipe in a hole, I explained that if our tool went inside the metal in such manner as to be completely surrounded by metal, we could locate it.

"What if you go *alongside* the metal body?" he inquired.

"Sometimes," I replied. "But we can't be sure of it in all cases."

He took a deep drag on his cigarette. "Well, how about a case where the hole is near metal? Can you detect metal under such circumstances?"

By that time, I was trying to figure out what he was up to. However, I contained my curiosity and informed him to the best of my ability about what he could expect from our log. He consulted briefly with his companions, then said frankly:

"We think we've located a big silver bullion made by the Spaniards nearly two hundred years ago. We've drilled a hole which we have reason to believe has penetrated this deposit. We want you to run a log to check it. And—to show our good faith—I'll give you a certified check for the cost of the log before you leave town."

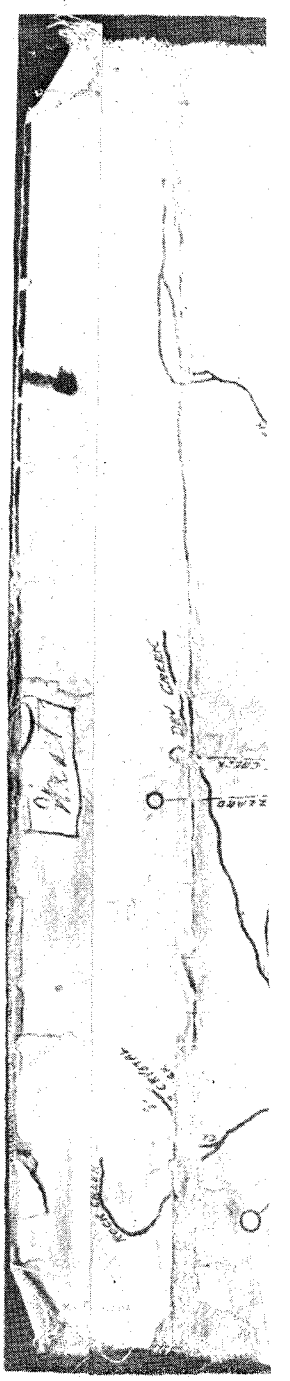
I stalled a bit, wanting to know more about them before committing myself. I learned that they were small independent oil operators who had been approached by a man who claimed to have found that lost San Saba Mine, and who also knew of big silver deposits made by the Spaniards in old mine shafts in the region of the Mine. They had it figured they could charge off the cost of finding out to entertainment if the information proved to be phony.

Convinced that the men were reliable, I agreed to meet them in Menard, the town nearest their drill hole, with the truck and equipment. They left, and I got on the company two-way radio to locate some special equipment that might do the job if our regular log failed to turn the trick. When I told the man on the other end of the circuit what I wanted the tool for, he thought I was kidding. Ten minutes of serious explanation was necessary to persuade him to transport the tool to Menard to meet us.

One thing about a two-way radio: it's just like a party telephone line. Within seconds after I signed off, other stations in our net were calling, mostly kidding me about my project. I took the ribbing for a while, but eventually it got under my skin. I turned the gain down on the receiver, and made the necessary preparations for getting the truck and gear under way.

TWO hours later, we met, as arranged, in Menard and went on out to the location. The hole had been drilled with a water well rig, and still had the rig over the hole. We strung up our equipment and proceeded to run the log. For check, I also ran the special equipment we had sent out. I wish I could tell you what I found, but all results from logs run by my company are confidential, so I'll have to skip that part. I can tell you this much. The man who had worked up the deal told me *before* I ran the log that I would find limestone beds at certain depths. My results checked him to the inch. He told me how thick the beds would be. This also checked. He also predicted that I would find evidence of a void space such as a mine shaft under each limestone bed. *These voids definitely were present.*

After finishing the log, we went back into Menard to eat a steak, and to shoot the bull about the mine in general. This was my first knowledge of the mine, and I listened fascinated by all the dope the men had dug up. At the conclusion of the meal, one of the partners presented me with a



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portfolio containing all the information they had assembled. This included all details even to a map of the old mines and the old Fort San Saba. I brought the stuff home with me, and spent several interesting evenings studying it over. The more I read, the more interested I became, until I finally decided that I would have to see for myself just what the possibilities of the mine's existence were. After several months of reading, and a lot of visiting the region and prowling around, I have reached this conclusion: IT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE, EVEN LIKELY, THAT THE SAN SABA MINE DID EXIST. IT IS ALSO EMINENTLY POSSIBLE THAT THE SILVER DEPOSITS AS HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED ARE STILL THERE. In order to show why I have reached this conclusion, it will be necessary to relate some of the history of the fort and the mine. I will also seek to demonstrate that despite the fact that, generally speaking, the region doesn't look like good mining country, it is quite possible that geologic conditions exist that make precious metal deposits in the region quite possible, even likely.

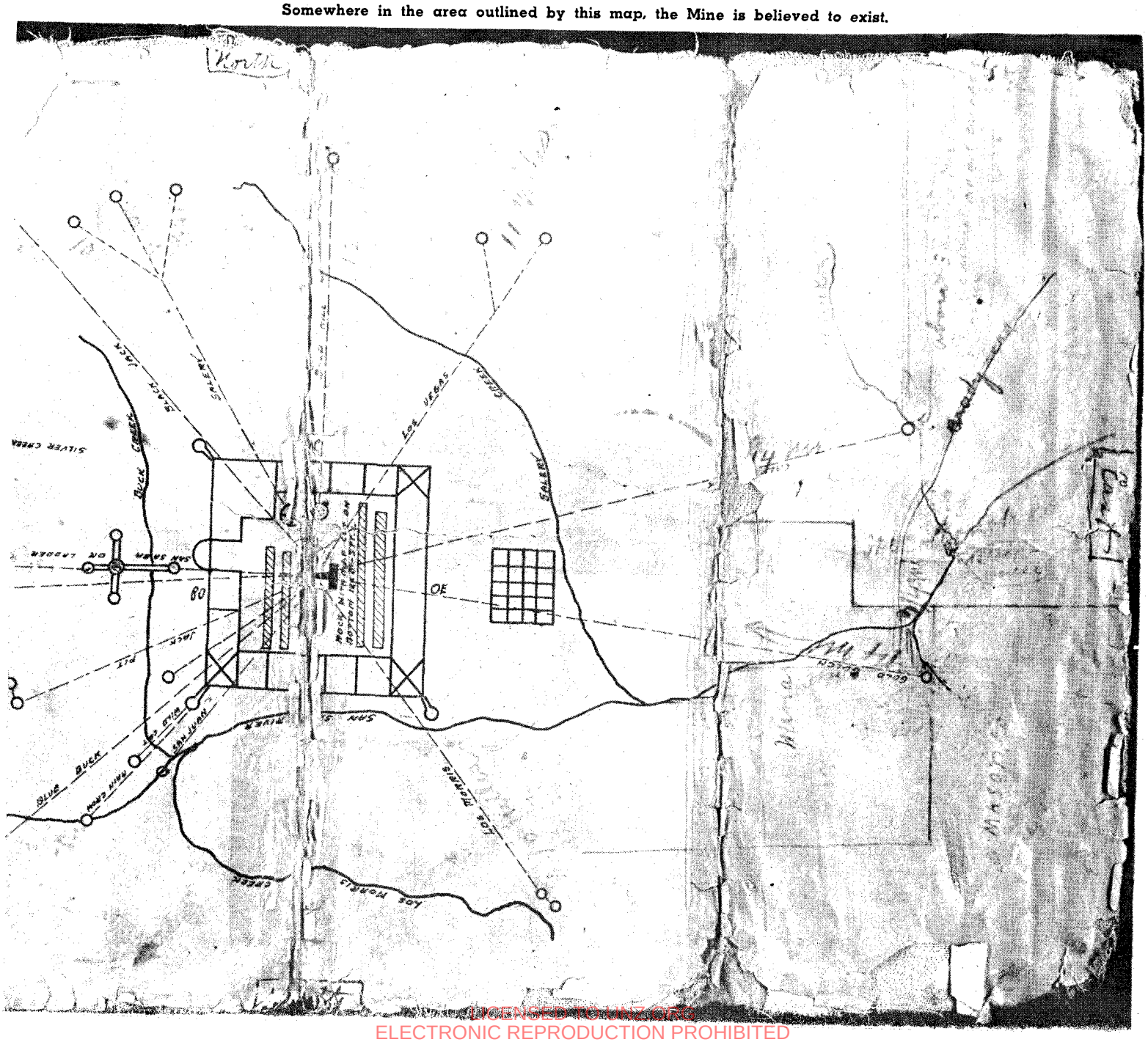
First, let's go back into history a bit for some facts about the old Spanish Fort and its reason for being. San Saba Mission on the San Saba River was founded in the year 1734 by a company of Catholic Fathers from Santa Fe. Its purpose was to minister to the spiritual needs of the Comanche Indians. Shortly after the establishment of the mission, gold and silver were found, and mining operations commenced. The mining operations resulted in the demoralization of the Indians, and in 1754, on St. John's day, the Indians massacred the missionaries, and destroyed the mission.

In 1758, another mission was built on the San Saba River. This mission was destroyed in the year 1790 by the Indians, and not a single adult escaped. The history of the missions is somewhat obscure due to some records having been destroyed during the Maximilian reign in Mexico.

OF THE forts accompanying the missions, a bit more is known. In the year 1731, the Spaniard Don Eugenio Domisile gave up mining in Peru, due to his losses to sea pirates. He landed finally at San Felipe in old Mexico, with his mining engineers, miners, and soldiers, and set about sending out caravans in search of gold and silver mines. He found numerous mines as far north as the Ozarks. In 1734, a caravan led by one Martinez Rodrigues, a mining engineer, is supposed to have found the San Saba Mine. Presumably, the caravan had stopped off at the mission in its search for treasure, and proceeded to search the area for gold and silver deposits. After exploring and mapping the region, the caravan loaded with gold returned to San Felipe, and another expedition set forth for the mine. When this expedition failed to return, a second group was sent out in the spring of 1735 under Don Antonio Solice. They found the first group had been massacred by the Indians. They also succeeded in finding the mines, and proceeded to load the caravan with gold for the return trip. Two

(Continued on page 34)

Somewhere in the area outlined by this map, the Mine is believed to exist.



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Small in stature, mild of manner, deadly with a six-gun: that was Luke Short, the

KILLER IN FANCY PANTS

By Wayne T. Walker

Photos Courtesy Kansas Historical Society

Luke Short: gambler, gunman, and aways a fancy dresser.

LIFE was cheap on the Western frontier and fiery tempers were backed by itchy trigger fingers, thus giving the local undertaking establishments a thriving business. Out of this turbulent era came many tales and legends of famous handgun artists: men like William Bonney (Billy the Kid), Wild Bill Hickok, Pat Garrett, Clay Allison of the Washita, Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson. Some of these fast gunslingers operated on the side of law and order, while the others were reckless exponents of violence and destruction.

There is one frontier character who is seldom mentioned or written up, yet there was none deadlier than he with a pistol. In most of his gun fights he shot but once, and when he pulled trigger somebody had his candle snuffed. The characteristic that set this little, dude-looking, fancy-dressed gent apart from other gun fighters was his steadfast inclination to avoid trouble. He never hunted it. But if a man insisted on giving him a hard time, the undertaker almost invariably had another client *muy pronto*. This sawed-off, sad-looking killer was Luke Short, eminent gambler and gunman of that hectic period.

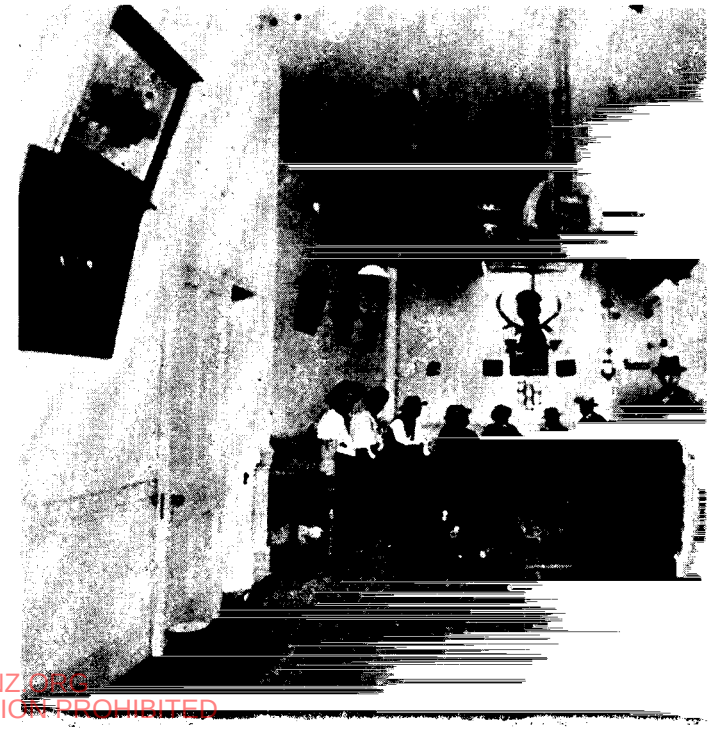
Luke Short was small and utterly unimpressive in appearance, with mild manners and quiet demeanor. Five feet four inches in height and weighing but 145 pounds, Short proved the truth of the adage that the most dangerous explosives come in small packages. From Tombstone to Kansas City and from South Dakota to Fort Worth, little Luke Short left his calling card—a neatly perforated corpse.

He made his unheralded debut on the frontier in Arkansas in 1864, where he hired out as a cattle herder on some of the big cattle drives. After eating the choking dust of the cattle trails, he drifted north and established a so-called trading post on the Nebraska-South Dakota border. Working out from there, he made a hefty bankroll bootlegging cheap whiskey to the Sioux. He also gained valuable experience in gunplay and soon sported six notches on his gun butt in memory of unlucky gents who had sought to take advantage of the runty-looking whiskey peddler. The Government cut short Luke Short's unlawful whiskey trade with the Indians. A cavalry detail clattered up to the post one day, closed it, and placed twenty-two-year-old Luke under arrest.

The young whiskey peddler was placed in the custody of two soldiers aboard a train. Destination: a cell in the jail at Sydney, Nebraska.

As the train moved slowly across the prairie, Luke politely excused himself to go to the "Gentlemen's Room." That was the last the trusting soldier-guards ever saw of the little man. He dropped off the train with his $60,000 bankroll intact and made his way to the Rocky Mountains.

The Long Branch Saloon in Dodge City, reportedly once owned by Short.



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IN wild and woolly Leadville, Colorado, Short set himself up in the profitable business of professional gambling. The suckers came to him loaded and departed broke. Luke had a never-ending supply of new customers, for he looked so ineffectual the boys fell over themselves for a chance to tap his bankroll. None succeeded.

Everything was running as smoothly as a well-oiled machine, including the money from the players seated at Luke Short's table. Then, one day when Luke was absorbed in a game of stud poker, a fellow cardsharp began needling the little gambler. Luke ignored him at first. Soon, however, he began to get slightly annoyed.

"Move on, fella," he said softly, pulling on his well-trimmed sandy mustache. "Don't bother a man while he's working. It ain't polite."

The other man, named Brown, became more and more abusive with his sarcastic cracks. Finally, with the idea of scaring the pants off little Luke, Brown drew his pistol and waved it back and forth beneath Short's nose. That was altogether too much. Luke flipped a derringer from a pocket of his fancy flowered vest and drilled Brown neatly between the eyes.

Luke Short and cards went together, like molasses and Grandpa's mustache. He became a master at the game. When one boom mining camp or roaring railhead town began to subside, he pulled stakes and drifted on to a better-paying community. He had set himself up in Dodge City, Kansas, when both he and Bat Masterson received a good offer from Tombstone, Arizona, to deal at the famous Oriental there. They accepted the offer, and Luke dealt faro at the elaborate gambling palace. Another friend of Short and Masterson was the marshal at Tombstone, Wyatt Earp. Wyatt was also made manager of the gambling room at the Oriental.

As always, the mild appearance of Luke Short served as an irresistible come-on for the suckers, and his faro table was usually crowded.

Charley Storms, another notorious gambler and gunman, came into the Oriental drunk one night and attempted to bust up Luke's faro game. Bat Masterson, a good friend of both men, tried to keep peace between them. He persuaded Storms to leave with him. After leaving Charley in his room, supposedly ready to hit the sack, Masterson hurried back to the Oriental and explained that Charley was home sleeping it off.

"Charley will be all right in the morning," announced Masterson laughingly.

"Like hell I will!" bellowed a loud voice behind him. There stood Charley Storms, wild-eyed, trying to draw a clear bead on Luke Short with his six-gun. The startled crowd dived for cover.

Storms threw down on the imperturbable little gambler, snarling, "I'm goin' to kill you, Short!"

That hesitation in pulling the trigger cost Charley his life. Short's bullet pierced his heart, and Charley was dead before he hit the floor.

PEOPLE usually have to learn the hard way, but eventually, the smart ones do learn. Tombstone's hardy citizens left the little gambler alone after that lethal display of his dazzling speed with a gun. Thereafter, Luke was able to attend strictly to business and quickly built himself a handsome stake. Later, with a full poke, he dusted back to Dodge City where he opened the busiest saloon and gambling hall in town.

Things went well—for a while. Then Luke's success began to irk important people. Ab Webster, acting mayor of Dodge and co-owner of a rival saloon and gambling joint, took advantage of his authority to try to oust Short from his profitable business. Luke was pulling the crowds with a three-piece band, so Mayor Webster pushed through an ordinance prohibiting music in drinking parlors. Short, obeying the new law, laid off his band. Crafty Ab promptly hired the discharged band and put them to work in his own place the next night. Luke hired another band, but Webster countered that move by stationing two deputies in Short's establishment to see that the band did not play. Luke got mad, threatened retaliation, and was arrested by Webster's minions. He was put on a train without trial, and told to stay out of Dodge.

In this emergency, Short looked up his friend Bat Masterson, who had suffered similar treatment from Mayor Webster. Masterson promptly wired Wyatt Earp, who came immediately. The three men worked out a plan together.

The *coup* that followed went down in Western history. The trio collected four other straight-shooting gunmen and prepared for a raid on Mayor Webster and his crowd.

Wishing to avoid trouble if possible, Earp left Short and Masterson in Kinsley, going into Dodge with the quartet of gunmen at his side. The first person they met upon alighting from the train in Dodge was Marshal "Prairie Dog Dave" Morrow.

"Howdy, Wyatt," greeted Dave. "I reckon you came to see about that dirty deal Luke Short got the other day. I'm mighty sorry about my part in that mess, but I didn't have any choice."

Earp looked at the marshal's badge pinned to Dave's vest. "How sorry are you, Dave?" he drawled. "Sorry enough to help us out a little?"

When Prairie Dog Dave assured Earp that he was indeed that sorry, Wyatt asked Dave to deputize him and his men in order to make it legal for them to carry their guns in Dodge. Dave obediently trotted down the street to the local lock-up and returned with five deputy marshal's badges.

After posting his four gunmen at strategic positions around Dodge's central plaza, Earp went before the mayor and the city council. He told them bluntly that he knew the truth of the Luke Short matter, and asked them to set it right.

"Luke Short and Bat Masterson are in Kinsley," said Wyatt. "I'm wirin' them to come on to Dodge. I already have some good men in town with me, and we aim to see that Luke gets a square deal. The rest is up to you, gentlemen."

Earp's words had a profound influence on the city council.

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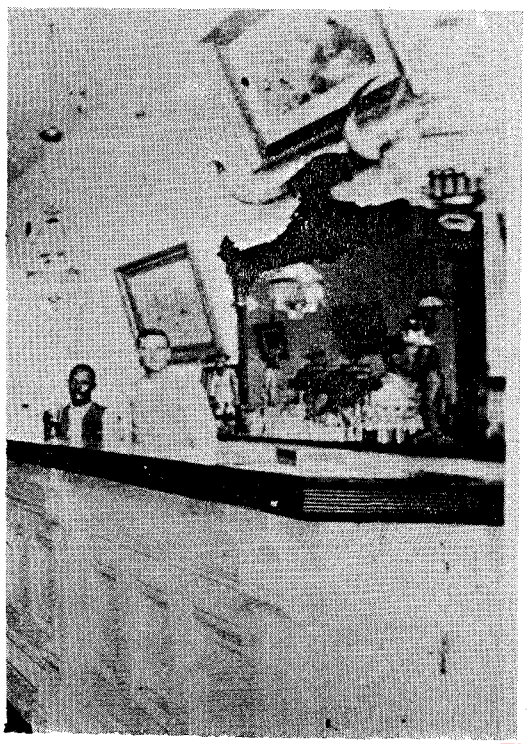

Luke Short stands top row center, with Bat Masterson at his right. Wyatt Earp, seated, second from right bottom row.

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NEVADA

By
Nell
Murbarger

Did the old tramp dog know the murderer of the stage driver — or didn't he?

UP in that high, rough land, where Nevada bumps into Idaho and snowbanks border the trails till the Fourth of July, sleeps the old mining camp of Jarbidge, Nevada.

Jarbidge is a ghost town. Her mines and mills are silent, most of her log buildings stand empty, and only a handful of folks still walk her streets. The younger men mine a little, and hunt and fish a little; and the old men smoke their pipes, and dream, and do a lot of remembering.

Particularly, they remember a certain long-ago night, when Death rode the inbound stage. . . .

It was back in those halcyon times when all the big mines in Jarbidge canyon were pouring forth gold, and the town was booming. Every saloon, on that night of December fifth, was packed to its threshold. The crackling and popping of pine-gorged heating stoves mingled with the slap-slap of cards, the whirr of spinning roulette wheels, the clink of shot glasses and silver dollars on polished bars, the scuffing of heavy boots, and the constant roaring overtone that comes from big voices and big laughter, and too many men in too little space.

There was only one disturbing detail.

The incoming stage was hours overdue . . . and Jarbidge knew it was no night for a stagecoach to be traveling the hazardous road that led south from Rogerson, Idaho! Driving four skittish horses over that road offered danger enough, even in fair weather—and the weather this night was anything but fair! Thin, dry snow had been spitting through the pines since mid-afternoon, and as winter's early dark settled over the canyon, an icy wind had begun whistling around windows and doors, rattling stovepipes and banging loose sheets of corrugated iron roofing. Even before this present storm, there had been three feet of snow on the narrow, twisting Crippen Grade, over which the stage must travel; and only two days earlier, several large freight teams out of Jarbidge had met a bunch of incoming teams from Rogerson and it had been necessary for the outfits to work all one night and half the next day before they could pass on the grade.

FEARFUL that the stage driver had experienced similar trouble, Postmaster Scott Fleming, about sundown, had asked Frank Leonard to take a saddle horse, ride up the grade till he met the stage, learn what the difficulty might be, and bring in the first-class mail.

But when Leonard returned, several hours later, he was empty-handed.

He said he had ridden all the way to the top of the grade but had not sighted the stage. . .

This development threw the town into a tizzy of conjecture, the consensus now being that the stage had run off the grade and plunged into the river—a theory that was held until about nine o'clock that night, when word of the missing stage reached a Mrs. Dexter, who lived at the north edge of town.

"Why, no," said Mrs. Dexter. "The stage didn't run off the grade! I'm positively sure of it, because it passed my place about suppertime. The driver was huddled on the seat as if he was terribly cold, and had his coat collar turned up around his face. I called to him and asked if he wasn't about frozen; but he didn't make any reply. . . "

The driver hadn't made any reply . . . and three hours later, he still hadn't arrived at the post office, only half a mile up the road from Mrs. Dexter's house!

Only now did Jarbidge begin to realize that the stage had not been delayed by the forces of Nature, but by human forces of evil.

Defying the storm that was now wailing through the dark streets of the mountain mining camp, a volunteer searching party, lighted by kerosene lanterns, began combing the canyon between the post office and Mrs. Dexter's residence.

Minutes later, the missing stagecoach was found in a dense clump of willows, a couple of hundred yards off the main road, and only a quarter of a mile from the business section of town.

SLUMPED on the seat of the coach sat the driver, F. M. Searcy. In the back of his head was a round, black hole, made by a bullet fired at such close range that the victim's hair had been powder

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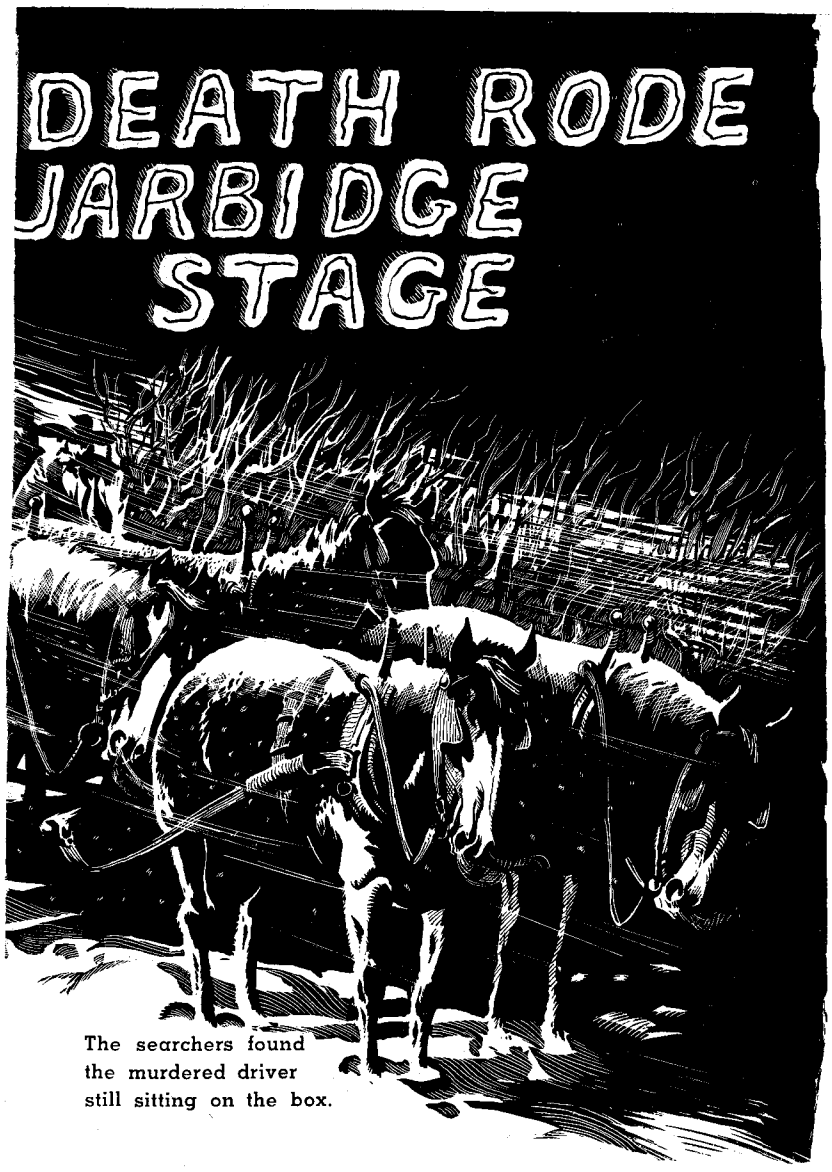
DEATH RODE JARBIDGE STAGE



The searchers found the murdered driver still sitting on the box.

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

burned. Three inches of snow lay piled on his body, and both the seat and floor of the stagecoach were caked with frozen blood. The horses, still in their traces and tied to a clump of willow brush, were plastered with snow and shivering from the cold. Near the stage lay the second-class mail sack, which had been slashed open and its contents scattered over the ground; but the sack containing the first-class mail—including $3200 in cash consigned to Crumley & Walker's Success Bar and Cafe, and other smaller amounts to a total of nearly $4000—was nowhere to be seen.

Darkness and the mounting fury of the blizzard prevented any further investigation that night, but armed guards were posted on every trail leading out of town, and no one was permitted to leave camp. It wasn't a good feeling to know that the man responsible for this foul deed was probably one of those aiding most actively in the search. . .

When the vicinity of the crime was examined the morning following, it was discovered that the murderer had lain in wait along the road, only a short distance below Mrs. Dexter's house. He had, evidently, swung aboard the coach as it passed; and, according to bloodstains in the snow, had shot the driver almost immediately. Startled by the shot, the nervous horses had started to run away, causing the stagecoach to careen wildly along the edge of the road for a hair-lifting hundred yards; there, the murderer had evidently been able to seize the lines and bring the animals under control. Continuing bloodstains in the snow along the road indicated it had been he who was driving when the vehicle passed Mrs. Dexter's house, which accounted for the fact that he had not shown his face or responded to her greeting. Shortly beyond her place, he had turned the horses and coach off the road into the secluded thicket of willows, and there had tethered the animals and gone calmly about his business of robbing the mail.

From the point where the stagecoach had been found, the footprints of a large man and a dog were found to lead to the river, where the murderer had washed the blood from his hands and discarded a bloodstained shirt. The tracks then led through the willows to a path that crossed a footbridge over the river and entered the business section of town.

Like most mining camps, Jarbidge had an old tramp dog who was owned by no one, but was everyone's friend. As the volunteer posse conducted its grim investigation, the old tramp was frolicking alongside, and when the group reached a point about one hundred yards from the bridge, the animal bounded off into the willow brush and began pawing at a small mound in the snow.

It was the first-class mail sack. The bag had been slashed open, blood-smeared letters were scattered through the snow, and the registered parcel, containing the $4000 in cash, was gone.

THE dog's apparent knowledge of the mail sack's location inspired someone to match his paws against the crusted prints of the animal which had accompanied the murderer on his grisly trail of the previous night. When the paws and prints were found to be the same general size and shape, it remained only to figure whom the dog might have been following.

Thus did the finger of suspicion first point to Ben Kuhl, an employee at one of the mines.

The old dog was especially fond of Kuhl. As a matter of fact, he was about the only friend Kuhl had in camp, for Kuhl just wasn't popular. He had been in trouble a few weeks previously—something about "jumping" a piece of real estate—and was then free on bond while appealing a $400 fine assessed in that connection.

This understandable need of money, coupled with the dog's friendship for him, and the fact that he wore shirts "similar" to the bloodstained shirt found under the bridge, was judged sufficiently incriminating. Kuhl was arrested on the day following the crime and was charged with robbery of the United States mails and with murder.

Searchers, later, found a coat buried under the bridge—a coat which Kuhl's partner said had hung in their cabin and would have been available to Kuhl, had he wished to use it. In the same cabin was found a gun with one chamber fired. It wasn't Kuhl's gun. It had belonged to a gambler, who had loaned it to a friend to shoot rats, and the friend had loaned it to another friend . . . and, even though it had eventually turned up in the cabin shared by Kuhl and his partner, there was no proof it was the gun that had killed the stage driver. Kuhl swore he had spent the entire evening in one of the saloons, and several men substantiated his story. Later, however, they said maybe it had been some other evening they had seen him in the saloon. . .

The whole case was very confusing.

About all anyone could say for certain was that young Searcy, the stage driver, had been very popular in camp, and now he was dead—shot in the back of the head by someone who had not given him even a fighting chance for his life.

Kuhl *could* have done it . . . and Kuhl had *not* been popular.

So Kuhl was It.

If there was any talk of lynching, no one remembers it, now. Everything was as legal as Blackstone. Taken to the county seat, at Elko, Kuhl was tried, convicted on circumstantial evidence, supported by bloody handprints on the mail, and was sentenced to life imprisonment in the state penitentiary at Carson City.

Throughout his trial and subsequent imprisonment, Kuhl never failed to plead his complete innocence of the crime, and after serving twenty-seven years, he was released on parole.

AMONG the twenty-three persons who still live in Jarbidge are a few old-timers who engaged in that midnight manhunt in a blizzard-swept canyon. Given half a chance, they'll retell the story, point out the spot on the road where the murderer swung aboard the stage, the clump of willows where the driver's body and the horses were concealed, and the bridge where the assassin washed his murder-stained hands and

(Continued on page 37)

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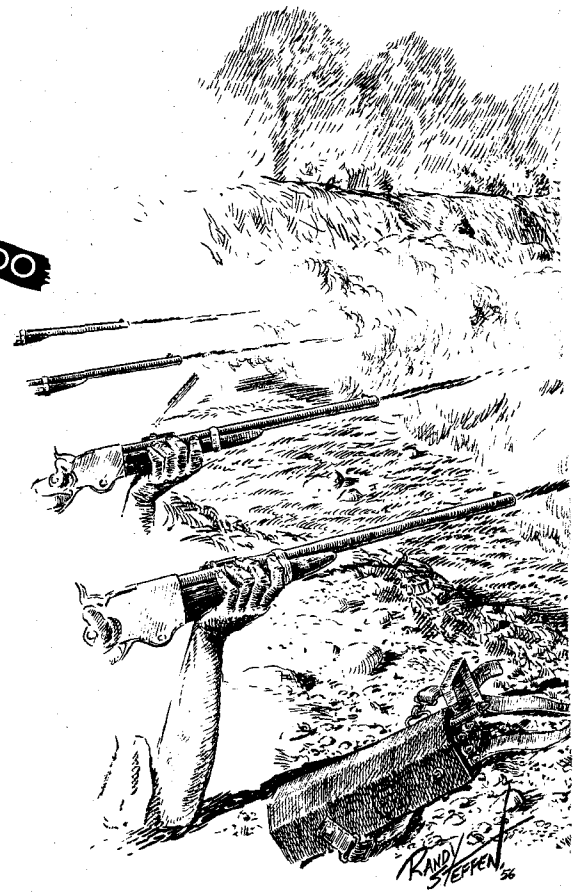
I FOUGHT AT BEECHER'S ISLAND

COLORADO



BY GEORGE OAKS

as told to C. V. Rinehart

Illustrated by Randy Steffen

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Mr. Rinehart, now 83 years old and living at Tucson, Arizona, jotted down this story as it was told to him by George Oaks. He writes: "This eyewitness account of the Battle of Beecher's Island was related to me by George Oaks, one of the scouts in the fight. Oaks' story is a different version from the one written by General Forsyth's widow. In her book, the General is given credit by the Army for winning the battle. Oaks maintained that the credit should have been given to Sharp Grover, one of his fellow scouts. He pointed to the fact that Forsyth was badly wounded; his second in command, Lieutenant Beecher, killed. The doctor—who was the only other Army man in the outfit—was also killed. 'If it hadn't been for Sharp Grover, we'd have been gone beavers,' Oaks insisted.

"George told his story to me in 1902. His death occurred some time during World War I." —C.V.R.

IT was in August, 1868, that I joined Major Forsyth's command of irregular cavalry at Fort Harker. The troop consisted of forty-nine men: scouts, plainsmen, and buffalo hunters. Major George A. Forsyth was our commander, with Lieutenant Fred Beecher assisting him. Jack Stilwell was the youngest member of the outfit, and destiny selected him to play a heroic part in the subsequent drama. Sharp Grover was chief of scouts. Grover spoke several Indian dialects. He was particularly fluent in the Cheyenne tongue, having married a Cheyenne woman.

Forsyth's mission was scouting up the Arickaree fork of the Republican River in northeastern Colorado. The advance scouts were ordered to keep a sharp lookout for signs of hostile Indians.

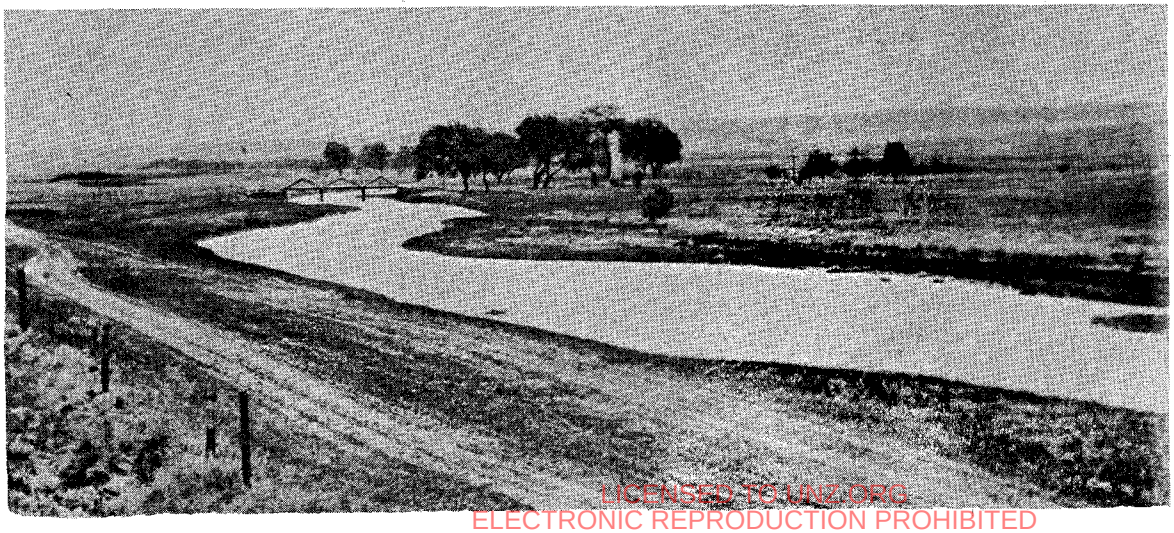
It was nearing sundown one evening when we rode into the dry bed of the Arickaree River to water our mounts at a water hole in a grove of cottonwoods. We watered the horses, tightened our saddle girths, and rode out into the open country. A scout studied the crest of a ridge suspiciously, and suddenly yelled, "Indians!" Another scout on the other side of the column called out at just about the same moment, "Indians! We're surrounded!"

Major Forsyth gave orders for us to take up a position on a neighboring dry, pebbly ridge. As this order was given, Sharp Grover, squarely facing Forsyth, cried, "I always thought you were no Indian fighter, and now I know it for a fact. How are we going to get water on that dry ridge? How are we going to entrench in that dry earth? We have nothing but our Bowie knives to dig with! *I* will take command of these men from now on!"

Grover told us exactly what we had to do to save our lives. "Ride back to that little island in the bed of the Arickaree. Dismount there, lead your horses in a circle, and shoot them down. Dig the sand and gravel from the inner side of the circle of dead horses and heap it against the carcasses and upon them, so as to form rifle pits. You have maybe one chance in a thousand of getting out of this trap, so *move!*"

We moved—*fast!*

THE Indians surrounding us were allied Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and Sioux under the command of Roman Nose, famed war chief of the Cheyennes. We estimated their number at about one thousand. They formed a close picket line about our position and waited for dawn to attack.



Site of the Battle of Beecher's Island between Major Forsyth's scouts, and Roman Nose's Cheyennes, Sept. 17, 1868, on the Arickaree fork of the Republican River, Eastern Colorado.

Frontier Pix

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"I watched fascinated as Roman Nose toppled slowly from the back of the great sorrel . . ."

They had one chance in a thousand of escaping the Indians, there at Beecher's Island. With guts and good marksmanship, they cashed in on that one chance.

The first night Grover called for volunteers to try to slip through the Indian lines and carry a message to Fort Wallace, a hundred miles away, for aid. An old, experienced scout and young Jack Stilwell volunteered. They removed their boots and succeeded in crawling past the Indian sentries in the darkness. They paid dearly for leaving their boots behind. On their way to the fort they were compelled to tear their shirts into strips to bind up their raw and bleeding feet.

Following the night of their escape, shortly after dawn, they almost ran smack into a war party of hostiles hurrying to the fight on the Arickaree. The old scout thought the Indians had spotted them, and whispered to Jack that they might as well stand and fight it out to the end. Stilwell said, "The hell with that stuff—I aim to live a while yet. Get down here and hide!"

They lay flat in a patch of wild sunflowers that had grown up around a decayed buffalo carcass. The hostiles passed within fifty yards of the concealed scouts without seeing them.

We, the remaining scouts in the rifle pits, had no way of knowing if our comrades had got through to the fort. The second night, two more men made the attempt to pierce the Indian lines but without success. They were driven back to the rifle pits by the Indian sentries. The redskins had drawn their lines so closely about us by now that nobody had much hope of getting out of the trap alive.

During the day the Indians kept us pinned down with rifle fire. At night, the warriors along the bluffs would creep close and shoot their arrows. The deadly barbs traveled in sweeping arcs, plunging straight down into the rifle pits. One arrow cut the lobe of my ear, another pierced my cartridge belt and slightly wounded me in the back.

Lieutenant Beecher and the doctor were killed early in the action. Major Forsyth was thrice wounded, but he gamely requested to be lifted on a blanket one evening so that he could have a look around the pits. The moment that Forsyth was lifted above the rim of the pits, there was a crash of rifles from the Indian snipers and the Major was wounded again. One man, holding a corner of the blanket, lost his nerve and dropped Forsyth to the ground. This scout was so completely unstrung that he lay on the bottom of the pits, moaning and crying and trying to dig himself in still deeper. That night, disgusted with his cowardice, some of the scouts drove him into a pit by himself.

In order to draw the Indians' fire, we would raise our hats on sticks above the barricades. We lost severals hats in this manner, as there were some damned good shots among the redskins. Sure makes me laugh these days when I read in some book or magazine how the Indians were all such rotten shots. Any man who can drill a hat plumb center at a hundred yards or better is a good enough shot for me!

Our supplies were now about exhausted, and we were compelled to live on putrid horseflesh. The jig seemed just about up for us unless help arrived soon.

TIME was sort of running together by this time, so nobody knew how many days we had been pinned down behind the stinking carcasses of our dead horses. After dark one night, Sharp Grover crawled to within hearing distance of the Indian pickets to listen to their talking. While he was out there between the lines, an Indian messenger came up and announced that Roman Nose had given orders to attack the scouts next day when the sun was at a certain height, Grover figured the time to be about ten o'clock. He crawled back

(Continued on page 36)

Major George A. Forsyth, military commander in the Beecher's Island fight.

Photo Courtesy The National Archives

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THE salt beds that lie at the foot of Guadalupe Peak in West Texas are far purer than most of the men who have, at one time or another, tried to get control of them.

For example, take Charley Howard. Armed with a handlebar mustache, a cunning knowledge of law and politics, and daring plans for making a quick and easy fortune, Howard stepped off the Overland Stage coach at El Paso one day in 1874.

Until Howard's arrival, El Paso had been a relatively peaceful town. A man's word was generally as good as his bond. Harmless horseplay was the vogue, even in the saloons. The ambition of most of the town's placid citizens reached no higher than drinking their liquor straight and browbeating the barkeep a little. Lazy arguments were often on tap, but nothing serious ever developed from them.

But with the coming of Howard, the naive Mexicans soon became acquainted with lust and legal mishandling of a man's word. And before the thing was over, men's necks were stretched and an act of Congress had taken place.

Howard, first to start a one-man war in sleepy El Paso, had a lot of other "firsts" to his discredit in this gullible community. He was the first city slicker to hit the Rio Grande Valley; a big talker with a big yen to make an easy living. Then, as now, this was a definition of a politician. Since El Paso County was 100 per cent Republican and Howard was a Democrat, a shrewd bit of politicking had to take place. Charley's keen eye lit on Luis Cardis, an Italian who enjoyed the support of the Mexicans because of their warm personal regard for him. Being a fellow Latin, he knew their ways and treated them fairly. This situation interested Howard, for with the Mexican votes in the palm of his hand he could control an election. There were nearly fifty Mexicans in town to one *Americano*.

Smoothly, Howard made his moves. He talked Cardis into running for the legislature on the Democratic platform. The same party wagon held Howard, who was shooting for a seat as district judge. The county went Cardis, which meant Democratic; and clever Charley rode in on the landslide. Once elected, the new judge showed his appreciation of Cardis' backing by continually criticizing and quarreling with him. Soon the men weren't speaking to each other.

MORE hate was soon generated in the area. For centuries, Mexicans had been in the habit of backing their wagons into the salt beds near Guadalupe Peak, scooping up the pure stuff and lugging it back to their *haciendas*. Behind them, the cavities they had made soon oozed to fullness again, and the inexhaustible salt beds looked the same as before. The salt was free to all, and no harm was done to anyone. From as far off as three hundred miles, the Mexicans came to the beds to fill their wagons. The law was unwritten but very real—the salt belonged to everybody. Then Judge Howard moved in.

The politicians, the frock-coated gentlemen with the glib tongues, had deftly maneuvered the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo; Texas had latched onto the United States, and the salt beds were subject to being filed upon for private ownership. Wily Judge Howard filed upon the land in the name of his father-in-law, Major George B. Zimpleman. Howard blandly informed the stunned Mexicans that the salt beds were now his property, and that no more salt could be removed unless paid for. The Mexicans cursed the Judge in choice Spanish profanity, but there was nothing they could do about it.

Arrogantly, Howard had two Mexicans arrested for merely *saying* they intended to take salt whenever they needed it! An angry mob of several hundred Mexicans bore down on the jail at San Elizario and set the two prisoners free. The mob surged on down the street shouting "Down with the Gringo Judge!" and "Free salt for everybody!" Luis Cardis hurried to the scene and quickly calmed the Mexicans. But Cardis remembered Howard's insults, so he told the Mexicans to stick to their idea of free salt for everybody.

The Judge ran into trouble a few hours later in Ysleta, while on his way to San Antonio. Warned of the Mexicans' attitude toward him, Howard holed up with four pals in a thick-walled adobe house where they figured they'd be safe. The Mexicans promptly smoked the Gringos out with fires of straw, and dragged Howard and the other *Americanos* before a justice of the peace.

The J. P. flatly refused to act against Howard, for the man actually had not broken any law. The land was his and he had acted within his own legal rights. Raging, the Mexicans collared the justice and dragged all six men before a county judge. He was another brave *hombre* and told the mob they had nothing tangible on Howard. Really teed off by this time, the gang grabbed the judge and the sheriff too, and locked up the whole outfit in a private home.

Again, smooth-talking Cardis quieted the unruly mob and managed to make them listen to reason. Meanwhile, a decision had been handed down by the courts: Howard was to be released on $12,000 bond, on condition that he swear to give up title to the salt lakes, quit the county and never return. With the hairs on the back of his neck standing straight out from fear, the salty Howard skedaddled to Mesilla, farther north in the valley in New Mexico at a point 41 miles from El Paso.

Right here the devil should be given his due and the fact mentioned that there were TWO villains in the salt pile. Howard had bulldogged his way in the open. Working slyly behind the scenes was Padre Antonio Borajo, in charge of the San Elizario Mission and a dark blot on the priestly records. So bad was Borajo that he later defied the Church and

To the Mexicans, the salt was the property of

SALT WAR

By Frieda and

Judge Howard found Luis Cardis in a store.

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became a rebel in the Catholic district. He was just as greedy as the power-mad Howard. He offered to team up with the Judge in monopolizing the controversial salt beds. The hitch was that he demanded part of the profits to be derived from the sale of the salt.

HOWARD laughed at the priest and said the salt was all his and that he'd share the profits with nobody. The padre promptly went to work stirring up his charges against grasping Charley and all his Gringo friends. In no time at all the evil priest had stirred up a devil's brew of racial venom.

A week after leaving El Paso County under bond, Judge Howard stalked into a store in El Paso, hurled challenges at Luis Cardis—who was dictating a letter of peace to both factions—called him yellow and tried his best to make him draw. Finally, Howard shot Cardis dead as he stood behind a desk, his upper body exposed. The salt owner then mounted his horse and rode back to New Mexico. Nobody even attempted to stop him.

The Judge had simply exacted Western justice, as he saw it. The Mexicans, hotter than the chile peppers that made up their daily diet, threatened to catch the murdering Howard and string him up. A U.S. cavalry troop from Fort Bayard, New Mexico, was dispatched to El Paso to be on the scene in case the situation got out of hand.

By this time Howard had gone salt-crazy. Informed by one of his agents that the Mexicans were about to "raid" the salt lakes, the Judge led a dozen hired gunmen from New Mexico into El Paso on December 12, 1877. Somehow he had acquired proper legal papers to replevin the salt when it showed up at San Elizario. Lieutenant J. B Tays, of the Texas Rangers, was to serve the notice. The whole outfit then moved on to Ysleta.

At Ysleta, Howard's friends warned him that nearly a thousand Mexicans were waiting for him at San Elizario. The Judge laughed off the warning, sent back a messenger to the cavalry officer in command at El Paso to bring on his troops, and headed for San Elizario. A makeshift company of Texas Rangers, under Lieutenant Tays, met Howard on the road, and they went on to San Elizario and dug in. When the U.S. forces showed up, a daring Mexican named Chico Barela stepped out in the road two hundred yards from the spot the Rangers and Howard's party were bedded down. He ordered the troops to *vamose* or they would be mowed down by cross-fire from Mexicans hidden all around them. The soldiers heeded the warning, returning to El Paso immediately.

That night, a local storekeeper and friend of Howard's, one Charles E. Ellis, was captured and put to death. The next morning Sergeant C. E. Mortimer, a Ranger, was shot in the back. Next, the Mexicans opened fire on the building where Howard and his boys and the Rangers were holed up. The fighting continued for several days. Finally the Mexicans tried strategy; they requested a palaver with Howard and Lieutenant Tays.

The substitute Ranger officer foolishly came out with Howard for the peace talk. Instantly, armed Mexicans moved between the pair and the building. The Lieutenant was ordered to surrender his Rangers with their weapons. Tays commanded his men to surrender—and an ugly chapter was written in Texas Ranger annals. This was the only time in history that a body of Texas Rangers surrendered to any foe.

Chico Barela, leader of the Mexicans, offered immunity to Howard and his men if they too surrendered. They accepted. Howard's bondman, John Atkinson, paid $12,000 in exchange for a promise of freedom for himself, Howard, and Howard's agent, J. E. McBride. According to reports, Barela fully intended to carry out his promise. However, when he sent word of the capture to Padre Borajo, across the river in Mexico, the unholy priest instructed: "Shoot all the Gringos and I will absolve you." Howard was shot and his body mutilated; Atkinson and McBride were beaten to death by the mob. U.S. troops arrived the next day to restore order.

NO account of the bloody Salt War would be complete without the testimony of Reverend Father Peter Bourgad, parish priest at San Elizario in 1878 when the conflict took place. The good father, much respected by the parishioners and citizens in general, testified to the Army board that probed the incident for the War Department and Congress. The priest stated that he counseled with the rioters before the outbreak and tried to achieve peace. We have Father Bourgad's word for it that his predecessor, Borajo, had defied the Bishop when instructed to leave San Elizario Mission. The Bishop's life was endangered by the wrath of Borajo and his rabid confederates.

As opposed to Borajo's continual pressure on the Mexican population to resort to violence, Father Bourgad urged them to be peaceful and law-abiding. His advice was ignored. When the Bishop met Borajo at Socorro he was called hard names by the priest. The natives feared to lodge the Bishop because of Borajo's sinister influence, and the eminent visitor had to camp out like a lowly *peon*. Failing to get possession of San Elizario, the Bishop returned to Ysleta. The Ysleta priest was sent to take over the Mission, but he too failed to oust Borajo. Finally Borajo left San Elizario, under stern orders from his Bishop at Durango.

Father Bourgad maintained that Borajo worked hand-in-hand with Luis Cardis at all times, and that he never ceased to stir up the parishioners against him while he was at San Elizario. Cardis and various leaders of the mob met

(Continued on page 40)

all; to the Gringos, it was a way to riches.

OF TEXAS

Samuel Hyatt

taunted, insulted, and finally killed him.

Illustrated by
Clay McGaughy

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Emperor Norton, in the fancy uniform presented him by his loyal subjects.

CALIFORNIA

HIS ECCENTRIC HIGHNESS

By C. R. Christopher

Photos Courtesy The Bancroft Library, The University of California

For twenty years, the "Emperor of the United States" ruled benevolently from his capital on the West Coast.

ON September 17, 1859, in San Francisco, His Gracious Highness, Norton I, overthrew the Government of the United States.

Joshua Norton, lately come from the Diamond Coast of Africa, proclaimed himself Emperor of the United States and Protector of Mexico and braced himself against the arrival of the United States Cavalry, which he expected to challenge this *coup d'etat*. The craven Army failed to put in an appearance, however, and for twenty years, Emperor Norton moved among his loyal subjects of San Francisco in an aura of respect, whimsy and love.

All San Francisco took to its heart what Mark Twain called "this lovable old humbug," and Emperor Norton became a municipal star boarder and panhandler *nonpareil*. In an era and a place where picturesque, unusual characters could be spotted on every street corner, Emperor Norton was unquestionably the most picturesque, the most colorful, the most fantastic of all.

His royal palace was a dingy rented room where he hung his flamboyant uniform on a nail and lived in such regal splendor as his affectionate and indulgent subjects were joyful to provide.

As plain Joshua Norton during the year of the Gold Rush, he had set himself up as a commission man and speculator. From temporary prosperity, he went into bankruptcy. The theory is that this is what unseated his mind or inspired him to perpetrate a most artistic imposture by which he contrived to live in respect and comfort, without working, until the end of his days. The consensus is that Emperor Norton really believed that he was an Emperor.

He levied—and collected—taxes, had imperial Annie Oakleys to every theater, restaurant, saloon, and hotel in San Francisco. The newspapers dared not refuse to print the imperial scrip or his welter of official ukases and proclamations. Every merchant in the city—excepting his Chinese laundryman—happily honored the Norton scrip, and even advertised the fact in his store window—"By appointment to His Gracious Majesty, Norton I."

As for the recalcitrant laundryman, Norton did not press this point, lest he embroil the great powers of the United States and China in war. He graciously enjoyed a loyal subject to take care of the bill.

EMPEROR NORTON took daily constitutionals along the streets of San Francisco. He had a substantial nobility of bearing and proceeded with conscious dignity. He had tiny eyes that twinkled with pleasure as he accepted the plaudits of his subjects en route. The most engaging aspect of his appearance, however, was his uniform. The first one had been given to him by officers at the Presidio of San Francisco. Subsequent royal raiment was provided by local haberdashers who vied with one another for the Emperor's patronage. The uniforms were blue, and heavy with brass epaulets which soon tarnished in the city fog. A sword clanked at the Emperor's side. His hat was a white beaver topped with feathers —eagle, peacock or rooster, according to the imperial mood of the moment.

The Emperor had a red nose but the customary diagnosis did not apply. He was a temperate man and if he went into the saloons three times a day, it was only to partake of the spectacular free lunches which were offered as a sort of loss leader to push liquid wares. During the rainy season, the Emperor added a Chinese umbrella, obtained by royal requisition. For a common and endearing touch, his shoes were slit to accommodate the royal corns.

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Emperor Norton frequently made official visits to the City of Oakland across the Bay. Occasionally he went into the provinces as far as Outer Sacramento. The University of California and other scholastic institutions often invited him to address student gatherings.

Toward his subjects, both high and low, the Emperor had a sense of *noblesse oblige*. An old lady might hear him order the streetcar conductor to let her ride free "as a guest of the Empire." Then the Emperor and his subject would both ride for nothing.

In collecting taxes, Emperor Norton made this essentially unpleasant business comparatively painless, employing a warm, personal contact. He kept a scrupulous accounting of all fiscal transactions. Occasionally he would drop into Wells Fargo to float a loan for the Empire. When the distressed bank president explained that the bank was fresh out of money because of a recent loan to Patagonia, the gracious Emperor gladly settled for a loan of ten dollars, instead of the ten million or so originally requested.

EMPEROR NORTON'S proclamations indicate his intense interest in the world about him. He was obviously above average intelligence and kept *au courant* not only locally but as a cosmopolite. No matter was too large or too small to warrant imperial attention if it affected the course of the Empire. He ordered the Imperial Armies to clear the Halls of Congress in Washington, D.C. He summoned President Andrew Johnson to San Francisco to blacken the Emperor's boots in punishment for attempting to usurp the Imperial authority. He was pleased, however, to accord President Grant the privilege of staying on the job in the White House as an Imperial Viceroy. He declared an economic embargo against a rink that refused to provide skates for the Emperor upon presentation of the Imperial Scrip.

Norton often gave foreign statesmen the benefit of his opinions. He forwarded his recommendations on solving the Schleswig-Holstein Affair and had considerable cable correspondence with Charles Parnell concerning Ireland's internal problems.

Or thought he did. The imperial traffic in cables was made possible by pranksters and thus he received communications purportedly from Empress Eugenie of France, from the Queen of Spain, and Earl Beaconsfield and the Emir of Afghanistan. He could be firm; and to the Emir, he sent the warning that if the Emir tried any monkey business, he, Norton I, would make it "mighty warm" for him.

The pranksters justified their fictitious cablegrams by pointing out that they practiced deception in order to keep the Imperial morale at a high level. For all the exploitation of Emperor Norton's pathetic pretensions, the first emotion that he evoked from his subjects was love. They were sure that no Emperor, in fact or fairy tale, had ever entertained the continuing solicitude for the well-being of his subjects that Norton did. They were touched by his kindness. He was all that, and often gave scrip to less glamorous down-and-outers on whom he had compassion in their misfortune.

Despite his many manifestations of a harmless, gentle insanity, now and then Emperor Norton gave demonstrations of wisdom and vision far ahead of his time.

His most famous proclamation ordered the construction of a bridge to unite the cities of San Francisco and Oakland. The bridge the Emperor ordered was finished in 1934. It was built according to his general blueprint with one exception—it stopped at San Francisco and did not extend thirty miles west offshore, to connect the Farallon Islands with the Mainland.

During the Civil War, the Emperor ordered churches of all denominations to do what they could to stop the senseless slaughter. He believed that war was a poor solution. He inveighed against the discriminatory laws that made Chinese evidence inadmissible in California courts and he repudiated immigration laws that restricted entry because of a man's color.

In his denunciation of the Revenue Laws, he pointed out the inequities in their geographical application.

WHEN smallpox attacked San Francisco, the Emperor proclaimed incentives to spur doctors to find a cure and he admonished his subjects to encourage and honor doctors who dedicated themselves to the accomplishment of this objective.

While others scoffed, the farsighted Emperor came to the defense of Marriott, the inventor who had devised an "Avitor" that actually got off the ground, however, temporarily. The Emperor decreed that the scoffers should wipe the smiles off their faces and accord respect and cooperation to this man who was trying to make his dream of an "aerial machine" come true.

In the later days of Emperor Norton, he added two dogs to his retinue. Their names were Bummer and Lazarus, and by virtue of their proximity to the Throne, they too were fed by the city. The animals apparently had rapport with the illustrious human waif. Upon their death, the dogs were stuffed by taxidermists for posterity's edification.

Emperor Norton moved through his capital city by the Bay surrounded by the love and protection of his subjects. Only rarely did he encounter instances of *lese majeste*. And when he did, he magnanimously ascribed the phenomenon to bad manners or remarked to spectators that the offender was actually the Court Jester trying to be funny.

In 1870 Emperor Norton received an enchanting cable from Monsieur Grevy, President of the Republic of France. According to Monsieur, Queen Victoria was planning to suggest a marriage between herself and the Emperor, to consolidate the friendly relations between their two great Empires. Grevy strongly advised Emperor Norton against accepting the Queen's proposition.

The impact of this startling news had not worn off before the Emperor received another cable, this time from Alexander II, the Czar of Russia. Alexander informed Emperor Norton that he had it, through diplomatic scuttlebutt, that Queen Victoria was setting her cap for the Emperor. Alexander extended his heartiest congratulations and said he was all for the consummation of this happy plan.

Bemused by the dilemma—whether to marry Queen Victoria or not—Emperor Norton was loath to make a snap decision on such a momentous matter. He still hadn't made up his mind when death took the decision out of his hands four months later.

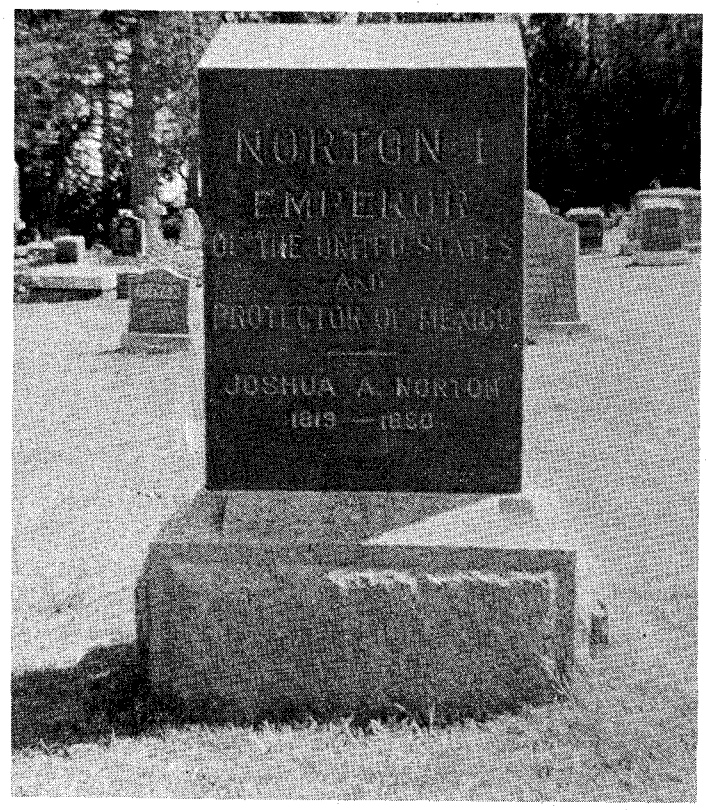
EMPEROR NORTON'S last days were undoubtedly filled with satisfaction at the progress of the Empire under his benevolent regime. He noted how San Francisco had changed from a turbulent hellhole to a gracious and civilized city. The provinces too were booming, and his subjects all over the United States were happy and at peace. Only one maggot nibbled at his contentment at this point—that he had not yet been crowned in Washington, D.C.

Ten thousand subjects came to grieve at Emperor Norton's funeral, the largest in the history of the city of San Francisco.

Half a century later subjects erected a monument over his grave. Emperor Norton received now and at last the recognition that he had always longed for.

The inscription over his grave, carved in stone, made it official and indubitable that he had indeed been Emperor of the United States and Protector of Mexico.

This fine stone marks Norton's grave in San Francisco.



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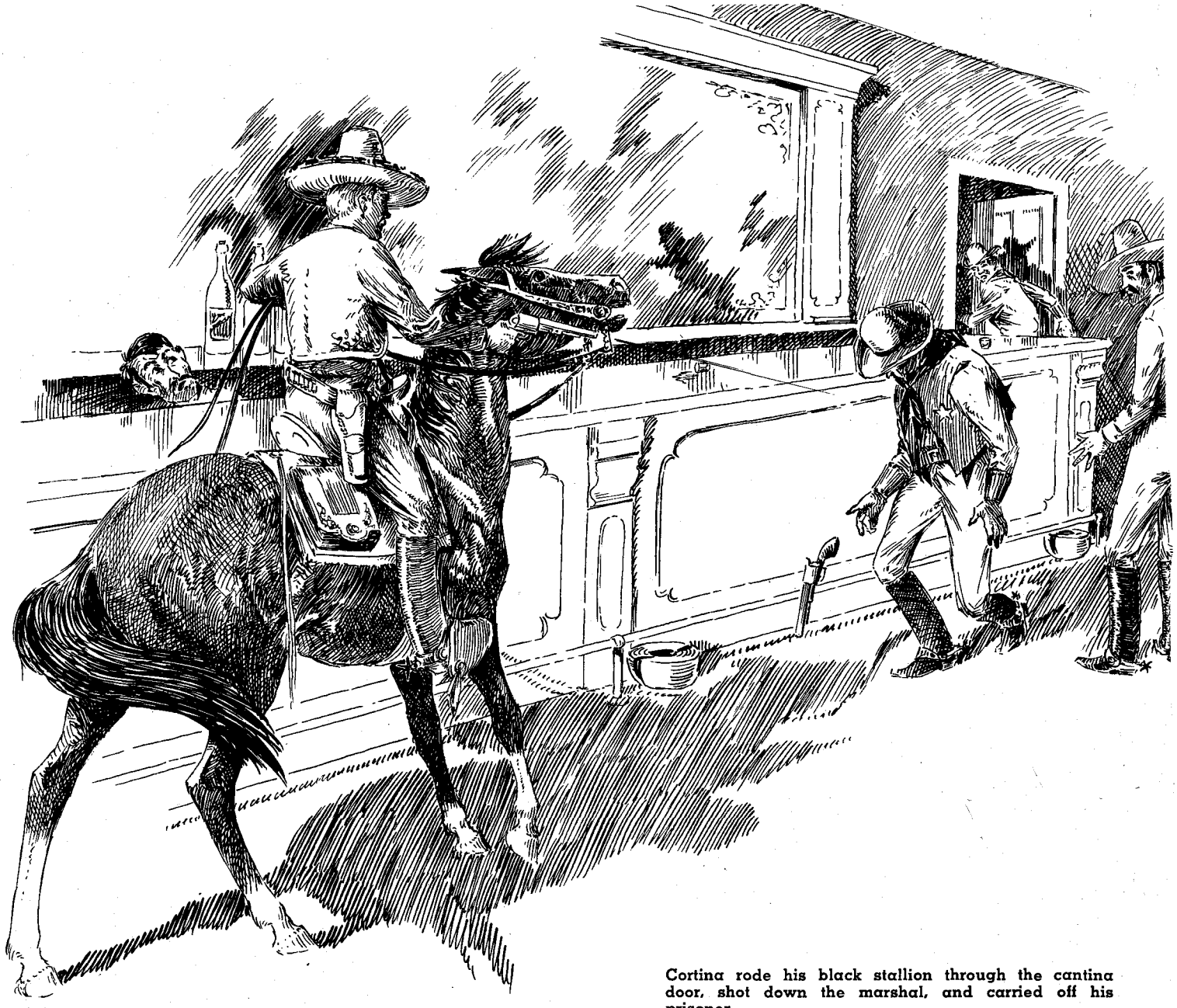

Cortina rode his black stallion through the cantina door, shot down the marshal, and carried off his prisoner.

HE commanded and ruled with iron discipline an army of over a thousand outlaws and adventurers of many nationalities.

He stole 900,000 head of cattle and horses, practically decimating the great herds of famed King Ranch.

He was mayor of a city, governor of a state, and a close second in a race for the presidency of a republic.

He was hero to thousands of Mexicans along the Rio Grande, who smarted under loss of Texas to the United States. He was admired and respected by important Americans on both sides of the Rio Grande, and his family was among the richest and most powerful between San Antonio and Mexico City.

To Texans, he was America's first gang leader, a large-scale bandit and a killer without compassion. He was Juan Nepomucena Cortina, more Texan than Mexican because his great-grandfather settled on a ranch in Texas in 1767 and acquired ownership by a grant from the King of Spain—although Cortina actually was born across the Rio Grande in Mexico.

Juan Cortina was an eternal contradiction. Physically, he resembled his genteel maternal ancestors. He had sandy hair, light-pigmented skin and the outward gentleness of his mother's family. But his father had been Trinidad Cortina, a commoner, and his father's blood and spirit ruled Juan. He was uncomplex, direct, primitive; a well-built lad of incredible physical endurance. The baby-blue of his eyes hardened into the cold gray-green of his father's eyes as his lithe body matured.

Soon after Juan was born, his father died—but the father's indomitable Indian fierceness lived on in the son. His mother moved to Texas and built a permanent home of seasoned ebony and mesquite on her share of the huge family ranch, which she named *Rancho Santa Rita,* about seven miles up the Rio Grande from Brownsville.

Here, she lived in the gentle semi-seclusion of a cultured widow of that day and quietly reared her children. She employed a family friend of long acquaintance to handle the estate for her and the children; and, in this appointment, probably lay the first small seeds of rebellion in young Juan Cortina. Gradually it developed that this guardian, a German-American, systematically robbed the family of the ranch's earnings, and helped other avaricious Americans later to set up legal machinery whereby many families of Spanish descent were robbed of their properties.

This was possible because the strip of territory between the Nueces River and the Rio Grande was still in dispute. Both Mexico and Texas claimed it, and it was left largely without government by both claimants. To this vast area flocked adventurers, land-grabbers, and fugitives from the United States, Mexico, Texas and Europe. Law was by nerve, audacity and the six-gun. The gentle Spanish families were helpless against such hard-bitten sharpsters.

BUT Juan Cortina inherited the good looks of his aristocratic Spanish forebears, not their gentleness of spirit. He possessed a fierce pride, and the shabby treatment of his people by these ruthless opportunists brought it boiling to the sur-

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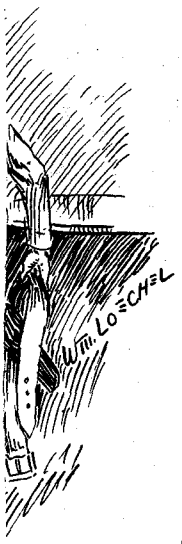
JUAN CORTINA— HERO OR BANDIT?



By Ruel McDaniel

Illustrated by Wm. Loechel

Hero to thousands of Mexicans, feared, respected, even admired by many Americans, this ruthless ruler of the Rio Grande country was a picturesque and mysterious figure.

face. Land belonging to the Cortinas had been seized by these robbers; even the Salt Lakes to the north, which had belonged to the family for many years, had been commandeered by the newcomers.

Leader in the conniving and land-grabbing was Charles Stillman, an unscrupulous operator from New England who gained his foothold and influence in the area by selling ammunition to Mexican rebels south of the Rio Grande. For obvious reasons, Juan Cortina hated Stillman.

Young Juan killed several men in the course of protecting his family's properties against the opportunists and common thieves. Charlie Stillman, being the political boss of Brownsville, controlled the semi-annual grand jury. At his direction, Juan Cortina was regularly indicted for murder at each meeting of the grand jury. The warrant was never served; everybody was too busy robbing his neighbor or guarding his own life and property from retaliation.

Looking to the future, Cortina gathered around him a number of reckless young men who either worked for his mother or shared Juan's growing resentment of the treatment the defenseless Spanish families were receiving at the hands of the land-grabbers. Before the citizens of Brownsville fully realized what was taking place, Juan Cortina and his hard-riding crew had become a dangerous problem.

When the citizens did realize it, they held a mass meeting for the purpose of raising money to pay a town marshal. They found the man they wanted in Bob Shears, whose first instructions were to arrest and jail Juan Cortina and his followers on various and sundry charges. Once jailed, Stillman's hand-picked judges were prepared to "throw the book" at Cortina and his men.

Marshal Shears wisely waited for Juan to show up in town before acting on the warrants. Cortina, accompanied by half a dozen of his outfit, rode into Brownsville on July 13, 1859. No longer a wild kid, Juan had developed into a tough fighting man of thirty-four.

On the morning of the 13th, Marshal Shears observed Cortina and three of his men enter a *cantina* near Market Plaza. At the same moment, he spotted another Cortina man enter a cafe across the street. Sending word to his deputies to come *muy pronto,* Shears decided to take the lone Cortinista himself. Pedro Juarado, however, saw him approaching the *cantina* and ran out. Shears shoved the muzzle of his six-gun in the man's ribs and ordered him back inside the cafe.

The marshal's maneuver was quickly executed, but not so quickly that Cortina, from his stool in the *cantina* across the street, did not see it. In a flash, he was outside. Mounting his big stallion, Juan headed him straight across the plaza and through the *cantina* door. Bob Shears didn't have a chance. The marshal was in the act of removing his prisoner's gun, when the doors burst open and Cortina charged in. Juan fired twice, and Shears fell, badly wounded. Bartender and customers dived for cover, and the deputies—just answering the marshal's summons—fled through the back door into the patio.

Cortina scooped up Juarado and rode his horse back through the batwing doors. The stud's pounding hoofs kicked up dust in the sleepy plaza. Still holding his man around the waist, Cortina sprayed the plaza with bullets, including a shot at the plate-glass window in the Stillman office.

Whooping defiantly, Juan and his Cortinistos galloped up the street and on toward his ranch.

THIS was Juan Cortina's first public show of defiance. The citizens of Brownsville were startled and worried at his reckless outburst. Many were in fear of their lives. The wounded marshal's deputies refused to take action. Town officials, by going personally from store to store and house to house, managed to get together thirty men who agreed to help the sheriff arrest Cortina for the shooting of Shears. Brownsville merchants contributed rifles, six-guns and ammunition, and the posse took off under the leadership of Sheriff Brown.

Just before sundown, they arrived at a spot outside the corrals of *Rancho Santa Rita.* Sheriff Brown, a long-time friend of Cortina, rode out ahead of the posse and yelled, "I've come to arrest you, *Cheno.* Come out with your hands up."

" *'Sta bueno, amigo!"* laughed Cortina. "Come and get me!"

Sheriff Brown wheeled his horse and faced his thirty posse-men. "You heard what he said. Let's go get him!"

Not a deputy moved.

Brown turned his mount and rode alone up to the gates of the corral. A warning bullet buzzed over his head. The sheriff drew a white handkerchief from his pocket and waved it frantically. The gates opened, and Cortina came out.

"Cheno," Brown said plaintively, "not one of my men will lift a hand to help me take you. Surrender to me. I'll see you get a fair trial."

Cortina chuckled. "With *Senor* Stillman picking the jury? No, my frien'."

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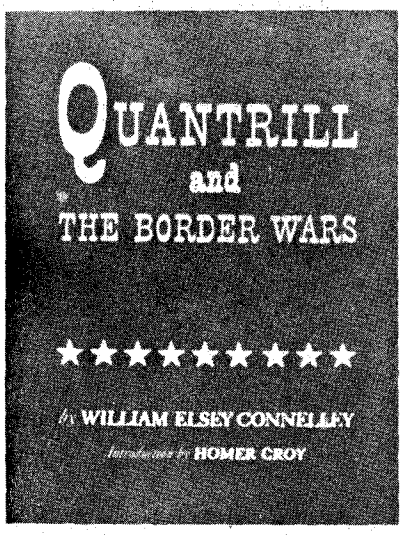

Long out-of-print, QUANTRILL AND THE BORDER WARS has been continuously in demand since its publication in 1910. The 1910 edition was a small one, and the occasional copies that turn up in the second-hand market have always commanded a high and, for many customers prohibitive, price.

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The parley continued, and in the end Cortina made formal demand on the Sheriff to deliver to him a list of men whom the outlaw leader felt had stolen from, wronged, or mistreated his immediate family and friends. He would deal with these men in his own way. The list included names famous or infamous in Nueces Strip history: land lawyers William G. Hald and Francis J. Parker; Charles Stillman; Mifflin Kenedy, Richard King, cattlemen; J. S. Lake and O. Klem, lawyers; Adolphus Gaevecke, politician and guardian of the widow Cortina, and most of those who attended the secret meeting and contributed to the fund to hire Marshal Shears.

With his cowardly posse slinking to the shelter of the mesquites, Sheriff Brown realized he was in a tight spot. Should Cortina, in one of his wild moods, decide to strike Brownsville at that moment, there was no force south of San Antonio that could stop him. Behind those pole corrals, scores of armed men awaited impatiently the word of Cortina to strike—anywhere, any time. The original plan to arrest Cortina now was forgotten, pushed aside by this graver problem.

Smiling, a corn-shuck cigarette hanging from his lips, Cortina waited for Brown to speak.

"I can't deliver these men today, *amigo,*" parried the Sheriff.

Juan spoke one word. "When?"

"You say when, *Cheno.*"

Cortina shrugged. "I give you three days."

To this, Brown agreed. The posse rode back to Brownsville, and the dickering continued. It went on to a week, ten days, finally a month. Messengers rode back and forth almost daily from *Rancho Santa Rita* and Brownsville. As the days passed, the apprehensive citizens of Brownsville began to feel better. By now, they had persuaded themselves that the demand of Cortina had been an angry gesture and nothing more. When thirty days slipped by with no sign of the outlaw, everybody relaxed. Another month passed, and still nothing happened. Now Brownsville folks began to crack jokes about Cortina and his list.

THEN, on September 30, Red Thomas, a Brownsville citizen, went across the river on business to Matamoros. There, on Plaza de Benito Juarez, a boy handed him a printed handbill. He glanced at it and rushed for the ferry to Brownsville. For all practical purposes, it was a printed death warrant for many Americans in the Nueces Strip. It read in part:

"Fellow Citizens! My part is taken! The voice of Revelations whispers that to me is entrusted the work of breaking the chains of your slavery; that Our Lord will enable me to put our powerful enemies under foot in compliance with that sovereign majesty . . . on my part, I am ready to hold myself in sacrifice.

"A society is organized in Texas which devotes itself sleeplessly to exterminating tyrants . . . and driving the invading Americans back across the Nueces . . . The names of members shall be inscribed in a book which shall forevermore remain a secret . . . "

Cortina's bold proclamation fanned old hates into flames of vengeance against the usurping Americans, for even the government of Mexico had never relinquished its claim to the area between the Rio Grande and the Nueces, much less the rank-and-file Mexican citizen.

Men flocked to the Cortina banner by the hundreds—some genuine Mexican patriots, many outlaws, and wanted men of American as well as Mexican extraction; adventurers, fortune-seekers without loyalty to any government. It was a motley crew, but Cortina ruled every man with an iron will. No leader in history ever had a more loyal army than the men who rode under Juan Cortina.

Red Thomas had learned that the manifesto had been in circulation for some time, and that Cortina was ready to strike. His news filled Brownsville with terror, and especially those citizens on Cortina's death list. Wild and unorganized plans for defending the city sprang up. Many of the wanted men left town and hid out in the chaparral with rancher friends or relatives.

CORTINA, with his new Mexican recruits, crossed over to the Texas side above Brownsville and moved to his ranch headquarters seven miles from that town. Awaiting him there were scores of recruits from the Texas side, ready to ride and die, if called upon, with *Cheno.*

There followed one of the most amazing episodes in American history. Within the week, Cortina marched on Brownsville. He captured Fort Brown, held by the U.S. Cavalry; he took the city hall and all other government buildings. His men methodically sacked the city, devoting particular attention to the property of the men on Cortina's death list. The outlaw leader liberated all prisoners, some of whom promptly joined up with him. He had the entire city searched for the men on his list, but to his chagrin found that most of them had fled. Cortina set up headquarters in the commandant's office at Fort Brown and ruthlessly dealt out death to all who had opposed him in the past, wherever his men found them.

By sun-up the following morning, after his men had sacked much of the city and got thoroughly drunk on *mescal* and *tequila,* Cortina called a halt. He adorned himself in an American colonel's uniform, marched to the center of the city, called a meeting of all citizens who would venture out and handed them a list of men he wanted. "Within one hour," he told a committee he named from the crowd—most of them his former friends—"deliver to me these men, and one hundred thousand dollars, American gold. If you don't—I'll burn the city!"

Americans frantically appealed to General Alejandro Carvajal, *commandante* of the military in Matamoros, across the Rio Grande in Mexico. The General promptly dispatched a formidable army of *rurales,* dragoons, and dismounted troops to Brownsville's aid. With them, rode a prominent Matamoros banker and merchant, the commander of customs guards, as well as General Carvajal.

The Mexican troops found Cortina in Stillman's store, issuing turpentine balls to his band, with directions to fire every building in town.

GENERAL CARVAJAL, a Cortina kinsman, delivered his ultimatum. Cortina knew his hard-boiled kinsman meant business. Sullenly, he rounded up his men and departed from Brownsville.

(Continued on page 28)

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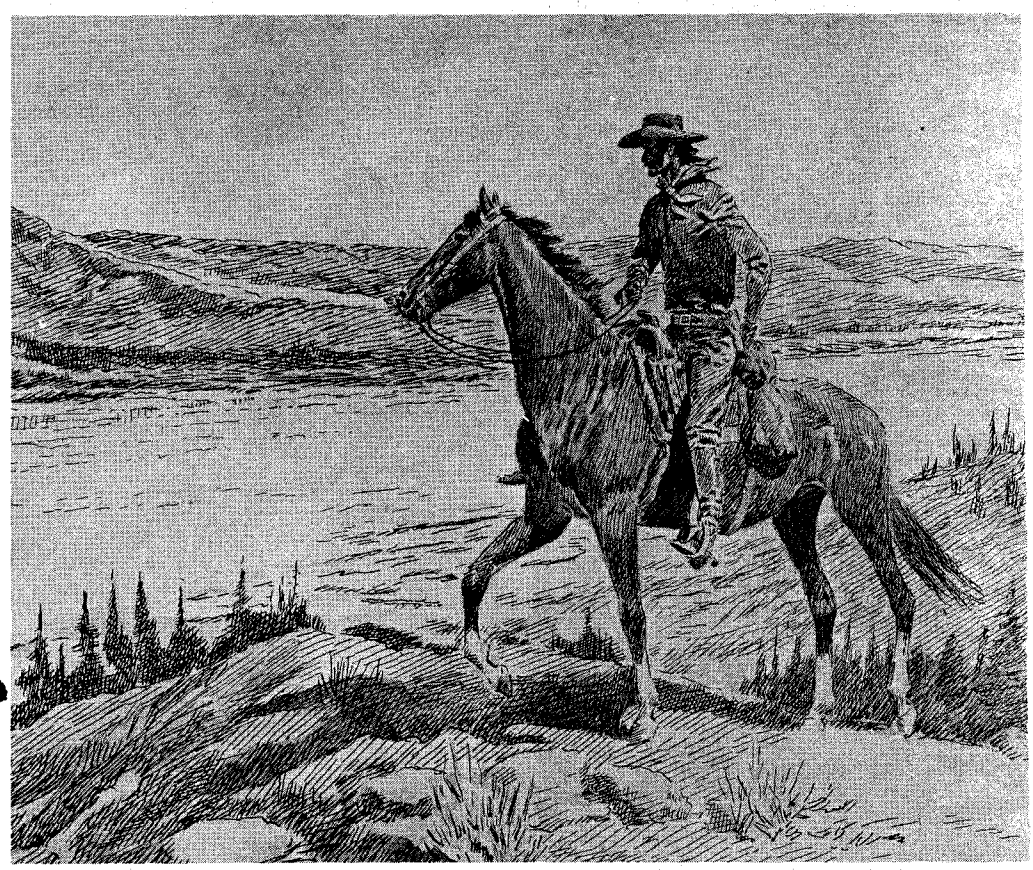
Hell For Leather



By Byron A. Ashley

Illustrated by B. D. Titsworth

With a hard-earned $12,500 at stake, trail-driver Louis Remme had to do some fast horseback riding to out-travel the news of a bank failure.

A MAN doesn't straddle a horse and go tearing off across the country for a week at a throw without something mighty important prodding him. Rides like that have generally got a six-shooter or a coil of rope done up in them somewhere.

When Louis Remme, a California cowman of the 1850's, knocked all the mudholes dry between Sacramento and Portland, Oregon, he wasn't in trouble with the law, but he had good reasons—two hundred and fifty of them, to be exact. Each one was a fifty-dollar gold piece on deposit in the Sacramento branch of Adams & Company's bank. The $12,500 represented a short but profitable trail drive, and the cowman was relaxing before a platter of ham and eggs in a Sacramento restaurant in February of 1855 when he heard bad news.

Excited talk from the sidewalk told him that Page, Bacon & Company, largest financial organization in the West, had experienced a bank failure. Smaller banks, notably Adams & Company, had suffered repercussions of the failure, and knots of worried citizens doubted seriously that they would ever reopen. Remme bought a copy of the *Sacramento Daily Union,* took one look at it, and made for Adams & Company.

At the bank, he argued unsuccessfully with a resolute bank officer, then shoved his way outside. Should he ride on to Marysville and try to cash his claim there? Not much chance; news of the bank failure was probably already there. He thought of Georgetown—of Placerville. Everywhere the bad news would precede him. He had to get some *real* distance into his thinking.

Remme stopped suddenly and let the mob of angry claimants surge around him. Portland! Adams & Company had a branch there! But Portland was nearly seven hundred miles away. The coastwise steamer *Columbia* left San Francisco for Portland the next morning—but if he elected to ride down river to 'Frisco and catch the *Columbia,* he would arrive in Portland simultaneously with the bad news. The throaty whistle of a side-wheeler at the landing caught his attention. It would be heading for Knight's Landing, fifty miles up the river. Remme thought fast and acted.

At the wharf, the paddle-boat was just hauling in its gangplank, but Remme jumped and made it. When he got to Knight's Landing, he borrowed a horse and pointed its head north. Daylight the next day found him ten hours and several fresh horses from Sacramento, in Red Bluffs, with misgivings about his decision. Even with good luck and good horses, the race would be nip-and-tuck—with bad luck. . .

The *Columbia* had left San Francisco by now, Portland-bound under a high press of steam, bearing the news that would ruin him. All that day he rode, and nightfall saw him roweling through Shasta City and Whiskeytown on a fresh mount. He ate breakfast at Tower House on Clear Creek, and there the road ended. After that, it took a cowman to follow the trails. He saw snow that day and felt the lash of a howling blizzard. At Scott Valley, after sixty hours of hard riding, Remme slept briefly.

OUT of Callahan's he struck a faint wagon trail and followed it into the mining camp of Yreka, then on to the state boundary on Hungry Creek, and into Oregon. He got scalding black coffee at Jacksonville and two hours sleep. Back in the saddle, he lost the trail twice and wasted precious hours backtracking. Several times he walked and led a fagged horse. At Dardanelles, he bought a horse from an Irishman named Kavanaugh and plunged on. Near Jumpoff Joe, a war party of Modoc Indians attacked him, but the gritty little rancher was in too much of a hurry to accommodate them. Citizens of Round Prairie stopped to stare after the hurrying rider, and there was some talk of a posse. When he pulled up at Joe Knott's roadhouse for some much-needed sleep, he had two hundred miles yet to ride.

Remme's next horse came from a friendly miner, who listened to his tale with sympathy. A cold rain was falling now and mud, fetlock-deep, made speed impossible. At dawn on the fifth day of his ride, Remme changed horses in Eugene, Oregon. Twice in the next twenty-four hours he swam the winter-full Willamette and by one o'clock the next day, he stabled his horse at a Portland livery. He had covered the 655 miles from Sacramento in a total time of 143 hours, ten of which had gone for sleep.

"Is the boat in from 'Frisco?" he asked a stable hand.

"No, but she's due any minute."

(Continued on page 48)

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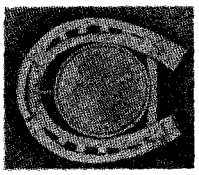

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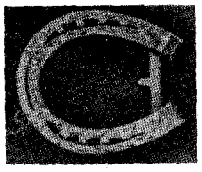

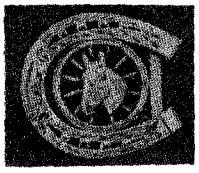

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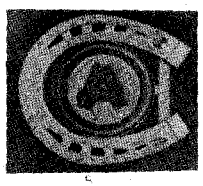

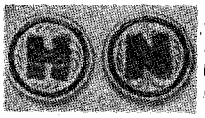

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Juan Cortina—Hero or Bandit?

(Continued from page 26)

He marched back to his ranch headquarters, and his army grew by scores as he marched. Fearing reprisals from the powerful Matamoros leaders if he returned immediately to Brownsville, Cortina systematically bottled up the point of Texas leading into Brownsville. He posted his men across the strip above the city, and allowed nobody to pass in or out of the beleaguered town without explicit permission. He intercepted all mail. When the postmaster at Brownsville attempted to send mail up the Mexican side of the Rio Grande to Laredo, Cortina's men stopped it. He intercepted steamer traffic to Brazos Santiago and Point Isabel, as well as up the Rio Grande.

Business in Brownsville was completely suspended. The residents abandoned most of the city and huddled, with their valuables, in the center of town and awaited their doom.

In the meantime, Cortina sent his men roaming the back country, robbing ranch homes and driving off cattle and horses.

Finally Red Thomas, veteran of the border country, managed to slip inland up the Rio Grande in Mexico and elude Cortina's patrols. He reached Laredo, 200 miles distant, in six days. He sent out from there urgent appeals for help. He sent messengers to Corpus Christi and San Patricio, begging aid, and he himself made a Paul Revere ride to San Antonio, a distance of 150 miles, in three days.

Relief parties began forming. A Ranger company under Captain William G. Tobin headed for Brownsville, recruiting as it went. The Army got busy. General Carvajal, of Matamoros, was prevailed upon by Brownsville citizens to send over an army to help break the Cortina siege. Mexican soldiers and American Army men, as well as volunteers, were formed into a force called the "Brownsville Tigers." They marched on Cortina in temporary headquarters in a *resaca* a few miles from Brownsville. The cunning outlaw feigned defeat and retreat at the opening of the fight, and lured the "Tigers" into a trap. Slaughter followed—then wild retreat. The surviving "Tigers" high-tailed it back to Brownsville, except for those who took the occasion to swap sides. Flags, two cannon, and many rifles were captured by Cortina. His band suffered only a few casualties, while killing twenty of the enemy and wounding an undisclosed number.

Companies of volunteers were formed in several Texas towns. Lieutenant A. L. Walker, at Laredo, was ordered to join Major S. P. Heintzelman, besieged in Brownsville. The U.S. Army ordered Brevet-Colonel Robert E. Lee, at San Antonio, to assume command of all U.S. forces along the border, and to proceed against Cortina. The order, however, was countermanded by another instructing Lee to proceed with all haste to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, to take command in the John Brown affair.

Rangers, volunteers, and Army men converged upon Brownsville, many of the outfits fighting among themselves and the officers jealous of power. They assembled near Palo Alto, scene of a Mexican defeat during the Mexican War, on May 8, 1846. Cortina was encamped on the old battlefield, and the confident Americans attacked. Again Cortina whipped the combined American forces. This victory, coming on the site of the ignoble Mexican defeat of thirteen years before, made the outlaw chief still a greater hero among the Mexicans.

Rangers and Army men continued to gather, and finally, in December, a combined attacking force of 300 men surprised a Cortina lieutenant and 350 men at Jackass Prairie and routed them, killing about twenty Cortinistos. Other fighting forces arrived, all quarreling among themselves.

ON December 17, Cortina—realizing that he had pillaged this area bare, and that the opposing forces were growing too strong for him to capture Brownsville—broke camp at *Rancho Santa Rita* and headed north. As he marched, he destroyed by fire the ranch homes of his enemies.

Three days later, he captured the town of Edinburg and marched on to Rio Grande City, head of navigation on the Rio Grande 135 miles north of Brownsville.

Cortina captured Rio Grande City on Christmas Eve, 1859, and levied a ransom of $100,000, American gold, on the city. In less than three months of action, Juan Cortina had made good his boast with a vengeance. He had captured two U.S. Army forts, two cities, a dozen villages, and had taken over $100,000 in gold, he had driven off livestock valued at over a half-million dollars, and he had virtually uprooted all semblance of law and order in an area nearly as large as New England.

On Christmas Day, Cortina ordered a fiesta for his men—and therein made a fatal mistake. By now, Rangers, soldiers, and volunteers were moving in on the area from all over Texas. More than a thousand men were in the field in pursuit of Cortina. Ranger Captains Ford and Tobin, disgusted with the slow-moving tactics of the Army, called for volunteers, formed a fighting force and crept to within hearing distance of the carousing Cortinistos.

After Cortina's men were full of barbecue and *mescal* and deep in their siestas, the force struck. It was a sound defeat for the surprised Cortinistos. Cortina led the defeated remnant of his band across the Rio Grande into the safety of Mexico.

In Mexico, the outlaw chief reorganized his force, set up headquarters, and began making raids into Texas. He raided the ranches of King and Kenedy, as well as others whose names still graced his death list. He continued to be a power on both sides of the Rio Grande.

It was claimed that he stole 900,000 head of cattle and horses from Texas ranchers during his raids.

Cortina's raids were finally broken up by Ranger Captain McNelly. The hard-riding Rangers hounded and harried the outlaw leader until he withdrew from the border and turned to politics. He was elected mayor of Matamoros, then governor of the Mexican state of Tamaulipas. He fought valiantly against Maximilian when the French set him up as a puppet ruler of Mexico. In a race for the presidency of Mexico, he was beaten out by his first cousin, Porfirio Diaz.

All in all, Juan Nepomuceno Cortina was *mucho hombre* and will long be remembered on both sides of the Rio Grande.

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Truly Western

Old-Timers' Corral

Dear Editor:

Being a native-born Texan, you no doubt have heard this slogan: "Jackrabbit or no breakfast." The phrase originated soon after the 320-acre homestead law went into effect—a law which brought hundreds of people from the East and elsewhere, seeking homes.

Here was a chance in a lifetime—or so they thought. What a disillusionment! Most of the land available under this Act of Congress was worthless tracts of gumbo, sagebrush, cactus and rattlesnakes. A jackrabbit needed to pack a lunch to lope across it. But when the older settlers—who had taken the pick of the poor land—tried to tell these people what they were up against, they were scoffed at. The suspicious greenhorns figured that the old-timers discouraged them because they wanted the whole country for themselves.

Most of the newcomers were broke, having sacrificed everything they owned to take advantage of this "wonderful opportunity." They soon were dubbed "Dry Farmers" by the old-timers, a name which has stuck through the years and was certainly appropriate. There was not a creek or a spring for miles in the great, arid wasteland. Those who tried digging wells found very little water, and even that was so alkaline it could not be used for domestic purposes. What water the Dry Farmers used had to be hauled in barrels many miles, not only for household use but for animals as well. Not a drop of the precious fluid was wasted. Usually all members of the family washed in the same water.

The 320-acre homestead law was one of the greatest disasters ever to befall the West. The homesteaders put the cattlemen out of business by fencing the open range. Later, the deluded sod-busters went out of business themselves, as most of the land they fenced was worthless for farming.

When the Government realized its mistake, it tried to remedy it by increasing the acreage of the homesteads from 320 acres to 640, which only brought another stampede of settlers to the West. This was indeed a golden opportunity they thought, but this too soon proved to be a bitter disappointment.

Many homesteaders never acquired title to their claims, which were soon abandoned. Some of those poor old Dry Farmers were lucky if they even had jackrabbit for breakfast, so that is how the slogan started.

I know, for my family were once Dry Farmers themselves—Lottie Breyfogle, Box 323, Upton, Wyoming.

Dear Mr. Wiltsey:

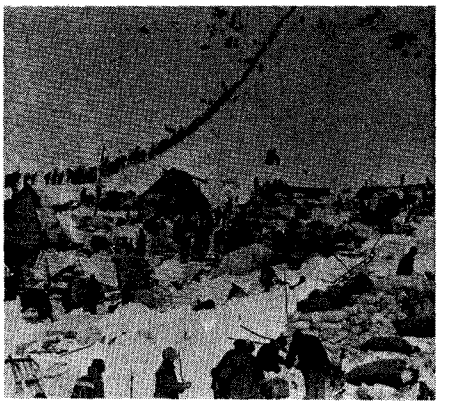
Let me assure you right off that I enjoy TRUE WEST very much, although I am not a subscriber.

Looking back on the November-December, 1955, issue, I would like to mention an incident in connection with your story on the Apaches, *Hawks of the Desert*. On page 36 is related the story of the killing of the medicine man, Nok-e-da-klinne, at Cibicue Creek.

I was teacher of the Cibicue Day School many years ago. In 1914, as I recall, a man named Smith came to my school and asked me to show him about. He said he was at the fight in 1881, and showed me a spot where he said it took place. I wonder if he was the Sergeant John Smith who wielded the axe on Nok-e-da-klinne? He was a man about sixty, and had lost an arm after leaving the army. He was very careful not to let the Indians discover his identity.

My Indian neighbor near the school was named Peaches (or Peachey). He was the scout who helped lead the military expedition into Mexico after the Apaches.

I remember well an Indian uprising intended to kill off all the whites. There were just three white families living at Cibicue at that time. My wife, the wife of the Lutheran missionary, and the trader's wife took refuge in the trading post. The missionary and the trader were away, and I was off on a turkey hunt, so the women were unprotected. One Indian pushed open the door of the trading post and fired his rifle at the women, shattering the trader's wife's arm. He then fled.



Line of gold-seekers climbing Chilkoot Pass in 1898.

Later, Peaches came to my house, borrowed my gun, and sat on my front porch all day to guard my family—John B. Peters, 820 Ventura Street. Altadena, California.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

It could very well be true that Mr. Peters' visitor was Sergeant Smith, as the age would figure about right. We have no knowledge of Smith after the affair at Cibicue Creek. Perhaps some other reader could amplify Mr. Peters' letter with additional information?

Old Photo Identified by TRUE WEST Article

Dear Mr. Gipson:

First, let me express my appreciation for your truly fine little magazine. Being an author of historical publications myself, I can only offer praise and hope this is "only the beginning" of many future stories. My field is California's great gold rush. My major publication, *Mother Lode Album*, Stanford University Press, 1948. It's still a best seller on the non-fiction list.

Among my many historical old photographs I have been puzzled over one titled "Over the Chillicoot Pass, 1897." I was therefore surprised and overjoyed when the April issue of TRUE WEST included the story *Haze Over Chilkoot*. Immediately I had a copy of my photograph made to enclose to you. The story described this picture well, I'd say. . . .

May I again say thank you for such a fine magazine. It has long been needed—(Mrs.) Otheto Weston, Staff Artist, Knott's Berry Farm, Ghost Town P. O., Buena Park, California.

Is This Gal Going to be Surprised!

Dear Sirs:

Guess that covers all the Editors. I've never written a line to the Editors before, but I just had to sit down and dash off a letter.

I've been horse-crazy ever since I can remember. I only used to get off a horse long enough to go to school, eat and sleep. If you think taking care of a horse in town isn't a job, try it sometime! Being so nutty about horses, I really liked the yarn about Midnight.

This letter will never appear in your TRULY WESTERN department, as I am an Easterner and only twenty-five years old. However, I have lived in Wyoming for the past six years and am only visiting my folks in the East right now. I plan to return to Wyoming next month. How long I stay depends on whether I can get a job.

I think you should make your TRULY WESTERN corner a lot bigger because it sure is the best and most interesting part of your swell magazine.

Incidentally, what goes with this expression "Barnyard Spread" as applied to B.S. in George Monagan's yarn on the Lost Dutchman Mine? From where I come from, podner, B.S. stands for something a lot shorter and more descriptive!—Dotty Johnson, 190 Tremper Avenue, Kingston, New York.

Critical Review of April TRUE WEST

Dear Norm:

Your last letter came a while back and I put off answering until the new issue of TW came along, as you asked me to look it over and make comments and give an opinion on it and on your article, *World's Greatest Slaughter*.

To my notion, April has brought out the scrawny little dogie wearing the TW brand in good shape. Shed off and slick. Meat spread over pretty even without big lumps in some places and just hide in others.

Your feature article, Norm, does a good job of tracking the old buffalo from the Ice Age right down to the gap where the hide hunters almost ran him over the Big Divide. It is a chore to do an article which may carry interest for a widely varied group of readers but *World's Greatest Slaughter* has something for those who like natural history, others who study ethnology, students of economics, *aficionados* of Wild West lore, and even some of us who liked the West better before too many "improvements"

(Continued on page 40)

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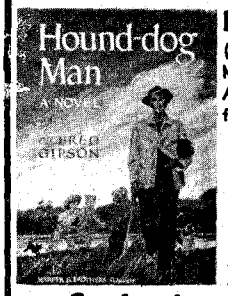
Fred Gipson

Reading him is like taking dope—once you start—you can't stop!



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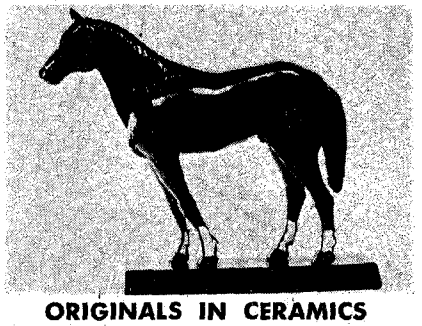

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Lords of the South Plains

(Continued from page 10)

and Kiowas, and when he told them to go to war and kill off the white men, his advice was easy to take. So hoodwinked were the Indians by this crafty trickster that several of them actually "saw" him belch forth a wagon-load of cartridges and swallow them again!

The bitter spring of 1874, with the buffaloes thinning out alarmingly and the gaunt specter of famine stalking every lodge, was the time the Prophet picked to sweep the white men from the plains. He announced that a great Medicine Dance would be held, at which time strategy would be formed for the attack on the whites. R. N. Richardson, in his book *The Comanche Barrier to South Plains Settlement,* writes: ". . . the call for a Comanche medicine dance and celebration was widely heralded, and when the tribesmen assembled in May at a point on Red River near the agency boundary, every band was represented, several of them by almost one hundred per cent of their people. For the first time in tribal history, nearly all the Comanches had been brought together at one time and in one place by the magnetism of a youthful medicine man."

The Medicine Dance—which took the form of a simplified Sun Dance—lasted for days. Leading off with a fiery speech, Ishatai warned the Comanches of the terrible fate in store for them if they bowed meekly to the white man's edict to go in to the reservations. "Look at the Caddoes and Wichitas and the other white Indians!" he thundered. "They are miserable—they are going down hill fast. I have visited the Great Spirit, and he has told me that if the Comanches and their allies go on the war path and kill off all the whites, the buffaloes will come back!"

This was what the young braves of the tribe wanted to hear. Only the Penetekas remained unconvinced. These Texas Indians—who had endured white domination longer than any of the others—decided to go back home and have no part of Ishatai's crackpot plans.

But if the Penetekas refused to be drawn into a hopeless struggle to regain their lost hunting grounds from the whites, there were hundreds of warriors who welcomed the opportunity. Kiowas, Arapahoes, and Southern Cheyennes succumbed readily to the spell of the Prophet's eloquence, and painted for war. A few of the older chiefs counseled against Ishatai's wild schemes, but were howled down by the eager warriors.

IN this month of June, 1874, the country north of the Arkansas had been hunted clean of buffaloes, and the insatiable hide hunters had pushed south of the river into Indian territory. Hide men had entered the Texas Panhandle; and twenty-eight hunters, including famed Bat Masterson and the youthful Billy Dixon, had located at Adobe Walls on the South Fork of the Canadian in Hutchinson County, Texas. The twenty-eight hunters and one white woman—a Mrs. Olds, wife of one of the party—occupied three buildings: Myers and Leonard's store, Rath and Wright's store, and Hanrahan's saloon.

About two o'clock on the morning of June 27, the two men sleeping in Hanrahan's saloon were awakened by a report like a gunshot. The ridgepole of the building had broken under the weight of the heavy dirt roof. Mike Welch, one of the men awakened by the noise, summoned help from the other buildings. A dozen men worked throughout the night repairing the shattered ridgepole. Billy Dixon and Billy Ogg went out at dawn to round up horses, for the journey back to their camp on the prairie. Ogg saw the attackers first—and he gave a piercing yell and dashed for the buildings. Dixon heard a sound like rolling thunder and glanced up to see a sight that never faded from his memory. In *The Life of Billy Dixon,* arranged and edited by his wife Olive K. Dixon, Billy vividly described what he saw:

"There was never a more splendidly barbaric sight. . . . Hundreds of warriors, the flower of the fighting men of the Southwestern plains tribes, mounted upon their finest horses, armed with guns and lances, and carrying heavy shields of thick buffalo hide, were coming like the wind. Over all was splashed the rich colors of red, vermilion and ocher, on the bodies of the men, on the bodies of the running horses. Scalps dangled from bridles, gorgeous war-bonnets fluttered their plumes, bright feathers dangled from the manes and tails of the horses, and the bronzed half-naked bodies of the riders glittered with ornaments of silver and brass. Behind this headlong charging host stretched the plains, on whose horizon the rising sun was lifting its morning fires. The warriors seemed to emerge from this glowing background."

But young Dixon didn't linger very long after catching that first thrilling sight of the charging allied war party. He lit out for Hanrahan's saloon, and barely made it in time. Inspired by Ishatai and led by Quanah Parker, the great war party of Comanches, Kiowas, Cheyennes and Arapahoes charged right up to the buildings and hammered on the doors with their war-clubs. The deadly Sharps rifles of the defenders dropped three warriors at the first volley, and the body of Indians split and swept on past, reuniting to circle the sod-walled houses at a gallop. A bugle blared somewhere out in the maelstrom of dust and smoke and racing horses, and the Indians charged again.

SEVEN hundred warriors were believed to have composed the attacking war party, but it is extremely unlikely that more than three hundred were involved. The Indians themselves claimed but 250 braves in the battle. The warriors were directed by bugle calls until their Negro bugler was killed late in the afternoon of the first day's fight. This trick boomeranged on the Indians, since the calls had been copied from the U.S. Army and were understood by the hunters. Thus they were tipped off to every coming maneuver of the Indians.

The first day saw most of the real fighting, and the battle had practically ceased by four o'clock. Three white men had been killed, and the bodies of thirteen Indians were left near the buildings. The warriors hung around for several days, but the powerful Sharps rifles of the hide hunters kept them at a respectful distance. Billy Dixon, at a reported range of seven-eighths of a mile, dropped one brave from his horse among a party of mounted Indians watching from a bluff. All the Indians drifted away soon after.

The defeat was a terrific setback for the Comanches and their allies after the

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impassioned buildup by Ishatai. The medicine man got himself off the hook by explaining the failure of the attack as the result of a Cheyenne, on the way to Adobe Walls, killing and skinning a skunk. This messy business, according to the Prophet, had broken the charm and nullified his magic powers.

Despite their failure at Adobe Walls, the Indians stayed on the war path. Near Buffalo Springs, about fifty miles north of the Cheyenne Agency, a party of Cheyennes and Comanches attacked and burned a train of three wagons and killed four men. Early in July, the Cheyennes and Comanches swept through the ranch country of southern Colorado, burning buildings, running off stock and killing between thirty and sixty people. This band later attacked the settlements in the vicinity of Sun City and Medicine Lodge, Kansas. Other flying war parties attacked settlements in Texas. The whole frontier was in a turmoil, demanding that the Army move at once to destroy the hostiles.

The widespread Indian raids in 1874 quickly canceled out the limping Peace Policy, and official Washington took the handcuffs off the Army and told it to go in and clean up the hostiles. Troops poured into the stamping grounds of the Comanches and Kiowas. Colonel Nelson A. Miles' hard-bitten command jumped off from Camp Supply and moved south; Major William Price's column struck east from Fort Union in northern New Mexico; Lieutenant-Colonel J. W. Davidson's outfit swung toward the west from Fort Sill. Other military forces in the field were the command of Colonel Mackenzie, moving out of Fort Concho, Texas, along the Fresh Water Fork of the Brazos; and the command of Colonel G. P. Buell, marching up Red River in the Davidson-Mackenzie area. The troops were jubilant, for—after months of chafing inactivity—they were marching again. The general orders given to their commanders were starkly simple: "Drive all the Indians onto the reservations or kill them."

COLONEL MACKENZIE was first to contact the hostiles. A large band of Kiowas under Chief Lone Wolf had taken refuge in Palo Duro Canyon, in northern Texas. At noon on the 28th of September, Mackenzie's Seminole and Tonkawa scouts exchanged shots with the enemy near Tule Canyon. The enemy scouts melted into the wild country between Tule and Palo Duro Canyons, and Mackenzie camped that night a few miles down-canyon from where the first skirmish had occurred.

"Had t'plug two of them danged, bloodthirsty tourists! Kept saying, 'What speed should we shoot him at?' "

All night the Kiowas harried the troops by sneaking close in the darkness and taking pot shots at the sentries. Kept awake all night by these tactics, the troops were in an angry mood next morning. Sergeant Charlton and two Tonkawa scouts took the trail of the hostiles promptly after breakfast.

The signs finally indicated clearly that they were approaching a large Indian village, and Lone Wolf's stronghold deep in Palo Duro Canyon was discovered about midday. Far down in the canyon, strung along a creek, the scouts could see the long rows of tepees and the vast grazing horse herd that indicated a large concentration of Indians. The three men studied the scene carefully from the canyon's lofty brim. "Take a good look, boys," said Charlton. "It won't be long before a sight like this will be gone forever from the Plains."

The three scouts reported back to Mackenzie shortly after nightfall. The Colonel had his men in the saddle immediately, and the command rode all night to catch the Kiowas offguard. At sunup the troops deployed in cover along the canyon brim, while the scouts searched diligently for a trail leading to the bottom. Finally a Tonkawa scout found a faint trail clinging precariously to the side of the steep canyon wall. The troops started the perilous descent, with Lieutenant Thompson leading the way.

It was Mackenzie's hope to surprise the hostiles in their hideout, but halfway down the crude trail his luck ran out. A trooper dislodged a boulder, which kicked up a small landslide as it bounded and crashed to the bottom of the canyon.

Instantly the Kiowas rushed out of their lodges to give battle. Mackenzie's advance scouts barely had time to reach the canyon floor before the warriors were upon them. Hastily they took cover behind trees and rocks, and prepared to hold off the raging Kiowas until the main body of the troops had got down the trail.

Under the accurate screening fire of the scouts, Mackenzie made it. Shouting orders in his bull-like voice, the Colonel led the charge up the valley toward the Kiowa village. Stubbornly the warriors resisted, fighting desperately to give the women and children time to escape. In this they were successful, for at sunset the troops still had not reached their goal. Full dark had fallen before Mackenzie won through to the village—and by that time Lone Wolf and his band had vanished. Mackenzie captured one hundred empty tepees and fourteen hundred horses and mules. The Colonel fired the lodges. The following morning he drove the stock to the Tule Valley, and there shot them all.

THE VAST roundup of the Comanches and Kiowas continued without a letup. On October 9, Colonel Buell attacked and destroyed a Kiowa camp on the Salt Fork in Greer County. Four days later, Major Price attacked and defeated another band of hostiles in Hemphill County. The hard-driving Miles rounded up the survivors of these various engagements deep in the Staked Plain, where they had fled in the false hope of sanctuary. Hunger and cold weather finished what the troops had begun. Without supplies or enough horses, the Indians could not get through the winter. Band after band came in to sur-

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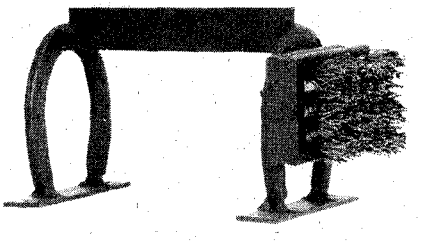

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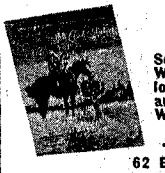

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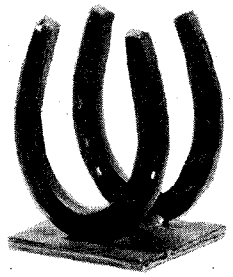

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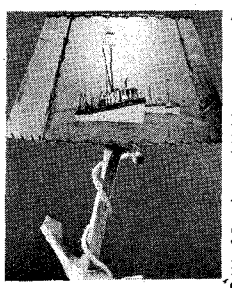

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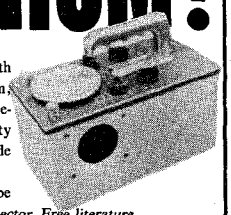

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render unconditionally and be placed in a stockade on Cache Creek. Some warriors were locked in an unfinished icehouse. Once a day an Army supply wagon pulled up beside the icehouse, and troopers tossed chunks of raw meat over the walls as if they were feeding dangerous wild beasts.

All remaining horses, mules, and weapons were stripped from the captives. Over 5,000 horses and mules were sold at an average of four dollars each. Many others were given to white soldiers and settlers and to Indian scouts.

The end was not long in coming for the Comanches still free upon the Plains. Over 400 came in before May of 1875, and on June 2, Quanah Parker rode in to Fort Sill to surrender his band. An official enrollment made later that summer disclosed that 1,597 Comanches and 1,076 Kiowas were on the reservations. It was estimated that only about fifty Comanches were still skulking about, avoiding capture at the time of the enrollment.

Yet the war-like spirit of the Comanches was not yet entirely dead. In 1876, buffaloes still ranged in limited numbers on the Staked Plain, and their presence there made the Comanches at Fort Sill restless. The Indians knew that the white hide hunters were engaged in killing off this last remnant of the great southern herd that once had supported them, and their yearning to return to the old independent life of the hunter became too great to bear. Late in December, 1876, Chief Black Horse and 170 of his followers bolted the reservation at Fort Sill and headed for the Staked Plain. They were determined to enjoy one last bellyful of buffalo meat, and if the white hunters got in their way they would know what to do with them.

Cavalry pursued the fleeing band, but a heavy snowstorm hid their trail and the baffled troops turned back. Black Horse and his band went into camp in Thompson's Canyon, a wild and lonely spot on the edge of the Staked Plain. There was plenty of game, including buffaloes. The cooking pots soon were bubbling with meat over the lodge fires, and the women crooned with happiness as they set out food for their hungry families. The thin, hollow-cheeked children filled out again and looked once more like healthy, normal Indian kids. Truly it seemed that the Great Spirit was good and the old days had returned!

The pathetic dream ended in February when Comanche hunters stumbled upon a camp of hide men south of the Red River. Shots were exchanged, but nobody on either side was hit. Later that day, Indians killed Marshall Soule in his camp a few miles away and raided the camp of Bill Devins. Supplies and badly needed ammunition were taken from Devins' camp, but Bill and all his men escaped injury.

Tall, lanky Pat Garrett, later to win fame as sheriff of Lincoln County, New Mexico, and the killer of Billy the Kid, rode nearly a hundred miles to warn outlying hide hunters' camps that the Comanches were again on the prowl. The hunters gathered three hundred strong at Rath's store on Double Mountain Creek (a tributary of the Brazos) to map out a plan of action against the Indians. Volunteers were requested to hit the Comanche camp, and forty-five men stepped forward.

HANK CAMPBELL, an old Indian fighter, was elected commander. Limpy Jim Smith, a former member of the nefarious Plummer gang of road agents in Montana, was named second in command. A Mexican known only as Jose, who had scouted the country while a member of Mackenzie's command in 1874, acted as guide.

Man for man, this was probably the toughest and best experienced outfit of whites ever to move against the Indians. Each hunter was armed with a heavy caliber Sharps rifle, with which—through years of shooting—he was a crack shot. The Sharps outranged the Winchesters carried by many of the Comanches, and the Indians through deadly experience had developed a healthy respect for the big buffalo guns and the hardy men behind them.

The boys were plenty mad at the death of Marshall Soule, but the arrival of eighteen men from Godey's camp bearing a badly wounded comrade angered them still more. Old Man Godey, leader of the outfit, reported that Black Horse's band had attacked them while on their way to Rath's. One of the band had been armed with Soule's Sharps. They had killed the warrior carrying Soule's gun, along with one or two of his comrades, in a day-long fight. Finally, under heavy fire, they had escaped the Comanches and hastened to the rendezvous at Rath's. Spotted Jack was the only severe casualty, but three others had been slightly wounded.

The expedition moved out the following morning. Fifteen men walked, serving as guards for the supply wagons. The remaining thirty hunters were mounted, riding ahead and fanned out on both sides of the wagons. Upon reaching the towering escarpment of the Staked Plain, Jose found a spot in the rugged wall where, by doubling their teams, they managed to get their wagons to the top. Here they found a dim Indian trail.

Doggedly the hunters followed the trail all day. At sunset they found an abandoned camp containing the remains of two burned tepees. Louie Keyes, a half-breed Cherokee, looked at the charred lodge-poles and made the death sign. "Two braves dead," he grunted.

"Hell!" swore Old Man Godey in disappointment. "I figured we'd got three o' them red devils."

The hunters bedded down near the abandoned Indian camp that night, and hit the trail at sunup next day. Louie Keyes, Jose, and Jack Cook rode ahead to reconnoiter. The scouts located the Comanche camp that afternoon, fixed identifying landmarks in their minds, and rode back to inform their comrades. The hunters pushed off at once, and at dusk halted within three miles of the hostiles' camp in a gorge deep enough to hide their horses and wagons.

BARELY had camp been made when a mounted Comanche was seen to cross the canyon, riding slowly and bending low in the saddle in an obvious attempt to pick out their back trail. Louie Keyes took out through the brush to ambush the warrior, but a hunter, not waiting for Keyes to catch up with his quarry, drew down his Big Fifty on the distant human target and fired. The heavy slug knocked the brave spinning off his horse. "There's another one for poor Soule," the hunter growled.

Suddenly the wounded Indian jumped up and ran, staggering. He didn't get

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far before the hunters blasted him down. They hid his bullet-torn body in a clump of reeds near a water hole.

The killing of the Comanche decided Campbell against remaining in the gorge, as the booming reports of the heavy rifles might have been heard by other prowling warriors. The wagons and camp gear left behind, the whole outfit moved on. Old Man Godey, Jack Cook, and Jose rode ahead to locate the Comanche village.

Near dawn, the scouts found the Indian camp. Jack Cook rode back to direct the hunters. Hank Campbell split his men into three divisions of fifteen each, arranging his mounted men into two groups flanking his "infantry." Campbell himself led one mounted group; Limpy Jim, the other; Joe Freed, the dismounted men.

The attack was set to jump off at daybreak. Louie Keyes gave a shrill war whoop as the starting signal—a whoop instantly echoed by the rebel yell of an ex-Confederate soldier known only as Squirrel-eye. The thirty mounted men charged the Comanche tepees with their horses at a dead run.

Surprised as they were, the Comanches refused to panic. Warriors dashed from the lodges and sprinted to a low hill nearby, where they flopped on their bellies and began pumping lead at the charging whites. Joe Jackson was shot from his saddle; Lee Grimes and Bill Devins wounded. Campbell ordered a retreat to the canyon. The volume and accuracy of the Comanche fire was a shock to the hunters, who had expected to sweep through the camp without opposition. Pinned down in the canyon, they were further shocked to observe the numbers of the enemy. Unknown to the whites, the Comanches had recently joined forces with a large band of Lipan and Mescalero Apaches. Instead of the seventy-five to one hundred warriors the hide men had expected to meet, they were now facing nearly three hundred braves.

Old Man Godey expelled a stream of tobacco juice toward the swarming Indians and drawled, "Wal, boys, it 'pears like we've bit off more'n we can chaw!"

Hank Campbell nodded grimly. "We've got to get out of here before they ring us in solid. Smith, you take the horses and the wounded men down the side ravine to the water hole. We'll move up to that ridge yonder and keep 'em busy until Joe Freed and the foot men can join you. We've got one advantage —our rifles outrange theirs. It ain't much to gamble on, but it might pull us out of this hole yet."

IT WAS this superiority of the Sharps over the Indians' rifles that saved the lives of the beleaguered whites. Campbell and his men crawled to a ridge about four hundred yards from the Indian camp, and coolly and methodically swept it with bullets. Soon, warriors appeared fleetingly on the grassy crest before the camp, snaking their way toward the hunters' position.

"Stop shootin' up the camp, and work over that crest," directed Campbell. "Aim low—their bellies are huggin' the ground."

The buffalo guns raked the grassy crest from end to end, tossing dirt in little fountains where the bullets struck low. The Indians quickly broke off their crawling advance and dashed for cover, carrying their dead and wounded. "Watch close now," warned Campbell. "They ain't through yet—they'll throw a charge at us *muy pronto*."

Next the hostiles fired the prairie grass, and, under cover of the smoke, launched a sweeping charge. A full volley caught them as they emerged from a draw three hundred yards away. A dozen warriors spun from their saddles, and the charge faltered. Again the buffalo guns boomed, and more saddles were emptied. The surviving horsemen whirled their mounts, dexterously picked up their casualties, and raced back into the hovering smoke cloud.

Old Man Godey slipped another cartridge into the chamber of his rifle, and grinned at Campbell. "Reckon that's it, Hank. We done busted their spirit."

The veteran plainsman had called the turn; the Indians were whipped. Under cover of the billowing smoke, they withdrew. The hunters did not pursue the beaten warriors; they were satisfied with the mauling they had given them. They carried out their wounded to the wagon camp, where Joe Jackson died. The other wounded men pulled through. As Old Man Godey phrased it, unless a buffalo hunter was "head, neck or gut shot, he was too damn stubborn and onery to die!"

BLACK HORSE'S band, after having split up with the Apaches, was later rounded up near Lake Quemado after a short, sharp skirmish with a troop of the 10th Cavalry commanded by Captain P. L. Lee. Lee learned that the sharpshooting hide hunters had killed thirty-five braves and wounded twenty-two in the fight in the canyon. He also discovered that the Sharps taken from the body of Marshall Soule had proved to be a hoodoo weapon for the Comanches. The gun had fired the slug that mortally wounded Joe Jackson, but the warrior who triggered the shot had been killed. Another brave picked the rifle up, and he had been badly wounded. Black Horse's son defied the jinx by using the Sharps, and was quickly killed. Still another warrior braved the hoodoo—and he too was killed. The superstitious Indians then wrapped the "death gun" in a blanket with Soule's scalp, to appease his angry spirit. One of Captain Lee's troopers found it after the brief fight at Lake Quemado.

That was the last war trail for the Comanches. As with the other Plains tribes, the almost total destruction of the buffaloes had finally conquered them. Hunger had drained the fighting spirit from their gaunt bodies and left them broken and subdued. It would be pointless to follow this proud warrior people into the monotonous, stifling routine of reservation life—to observe them, ridiculous in ill-fitting white man's clothing, sitting stolidly in the sun waiting for death to release them from bondage.

Today the Comanches have conformed to civilization; their feet are set firmly on "the white man's road." But true lovers of the Old West prefer to recall the wild Comanches as they were on that bleak winter day in 1877 when they charged out of the smoke into the deadly fire of the buffalo guns in the Battle of the Canyon.

Lithe bronze bodies atop racing ponies; red-fluttering lances; a wounded warrior falling to the prairie and a comrade braving death to rescue him in a superb feat of horsemanship at full gallop—these are the things for which the Comanches are best remembered; these are the memories that will never fade.

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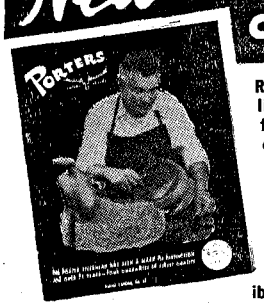

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Does the Lost San Saba Mine Really Exist?

(Continued from page 13)

days out on the return trip, the party was attacked by Indians. Twelve men managed to escape. Five of these managed to reach San Felipe.

In 1738, the Spanish Crown sent over a force of about 900 soldiers and miners, and proceeded to rebuild the fort. This work was completed in 1741, and the expedition thrived until 1754, when the fort was besieged and destroyed by an overwhelming horde of Indians.

In the spring of 1755, another expedition under Antonio Gomez returned and rebuilt the fort. They resumed mining operations also. In 1757, the Indians again destroyed the fort and massacred the inhabitants.

In 1758, a new expedition under Jose de la Amelgamese returned with some 2000 miners and soldiers to reestablish the fort. This group developed many mines, and worked a good-sized area. The gold they mined was carted overland to San Felipe, and the silver smelted and stored against the possibility of later removal. At that time the silver had a much lower value than gold, and the hazards involved in transporting it made it unprofitable to move.

In 1796, on a great religious holiday, the Indian tribes gathered, and were admitted to the fort to observe the baptism of Indian children. Once inside, they turned on the Spaniards, and a tremendous battle ensued. The result was that a treaty was worked out with the Comanches, Wacos, and Kickapoos for the abandonment of all mining operations.

Before abandoning the mines, a great deal of the smelted silver, which had been molded into bars, was hidden in mine shafts and buried against a later return. It is a matter of history that the French and English shoved both the Spanish and the Indians out of the area.

As mentioned earlier, the silver mined during all the mining operations was smelted and stored against later removal. The records show that five separate deposits were made, each containing 2000 bars of silver. These bars are triangular-shaped, and weigh about 80 pounds each. The silver was hid in mine shafts in a regular manner. The points at which the silver was buried describe a Catholic cross. Thus, anyone finding one of the deposits would be in an excellent position to find the others.

Waybills were prepared showing the location of each of these deposits. Each deposit was bequeathed to either an individual or the church or the Spanish crown. Four of these waybills were sent to Spain, and the fifth recorded in the archives of the Church in Mexico.

After abandonment of the mines, the Indians removed as much evidence of the operations as possible. This included even the removal of the ashes accumulated in the smelting operations. It is said that adventurers seeking the mines as late as 1822 could find no evidence on the surface of the land. Thus the San Saba mine passed into obscurity.

Probably the most widely known American to seek the lost San Saba Mine was James Bowie. He is reported to have spent eleven months with a tribe of Indians in the year 1821, and from them, he learned the location of the mine. He left the tribe and returned to San Antonio to outfit an expedition to reopen the mine. Some years passed before he was able to bring this about. When he finally returned with his party, they were attacked by Indians, and thus occurred the famous Calf Creek fight. This took place in 1831. Evidently, Bowie could never mount another attempt before his death in the Texas Revolution. He did, however, cause the mine to become known as the lost Bowie Mine.

In 1830, a Major Dixon settled in Texas near San Marcos. He had an old Indian working for him for years. Some Mexicans came to the Major and asked if he knew about some marked rocks and trees on his place. Upon learning that he did, the Mexicans produced a waybill, and asked permission to dig for some buried money on his land, agreeing to share the findings with him. He agreed, and they proceeded to locate the treasure and divide it as they had agreed.

Shortly after, the old Indian asked Mr. Dixon if he would like to have a gold mine. He told the Major about the Spanish fort, the Indian fights, and all about the mines. He agreed to take the Major to the mine. The Indian was a Waco, and secured promise of safe passage for himself and the major to the mine. Upon their arrival, they found the Comanches camped in the area. They were warned not to go near the mine, but were allowed to look over the old Spanish fort. They made notes on the country and returned home with the idea of returning later to seek the mine.

Shortly after their return, the old Indian died. The Major, being resourceful, learned that the Catholic Church archives at Montclova, Mexico, might contain some records of the mine. Together with Sam Fleming, Wiley Stroud, and a man known only as Ezell, he made plans to try to obtain information from the archives. They agreed to share the expense equally, and Dixon was detailed to make the trip to Montclova. He was unable to obtain any information from the church authorities, who told him that church records could not be shown to outsiders. Through a Spanish friend, however, he succeeded in meeting a Spanish girl who worked in the archives. The girl agreed to search the records, and transmit her findings to Dixon. A week later, she reported finding what he wanted, but told him that a great deal of time would be required to copy it without detection. He returned home, and almost a year later, was called to San Antonio to meet the girl. She had succeeded in copying the desired information, and she turned it over to him with the understanding that she was to get one fifth of their findings.

The partners formed an expedition and went to the site of the mine, but only after the Civil War had intervened. It must have been heartbreaking to wait almost six years to get a chance to see if their information was valid.

I HAVE in my possession several sworn accounts of what these men found. I also have sworn accounts of the waybill they came into possession of. I also have a copy of what is supposed to be a map of the mine area and the fort. *The waybills and the map agree in every important detail,* though they came from separate sources.

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These men found every marker described by the waybill, and the location of these markers locate the mouth of one of the mine shafts in *precisely the same place as shown on the map.*

These men entered the mine shaft, and found such things as steps cut into the rock going downward, sealed walls closing off shafts, and a number of things described in the waybill as leading to the silver bullion. Why didn't they open the shaft? Consider that the Spaniards employed two hundred men almost three days and nights in closing up the shaft. These men, with no real tools to work with, could not have done the job in years. They returned home, and as best I can learn, made an attempt to arouse interest and obtain help. They never succeeded.

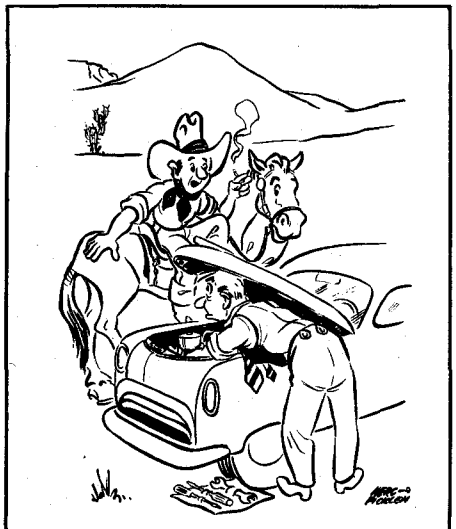
Yes, I think the San Saba Mine exists. I think so partly because of the map I have, the waybill accounts, and some eye-witness accounts of old mine shafts in the area. I have also seen old leavings from smelting found near the supposed location. I have seen the remnants of the old fort, and I have seen old Spanish coins found near the fort.

I also know that the mine is a geological possibility. Here's why: A few miles west of Menard, rocks of Pennsylvanian age outcrop. The area is generally overlaid by a Cretaceous blanket of limestone. If the Pennsylvanian outcrops, it had to be shoved up by something. I'd bet that the thing that shoved it up is a finger of the Llano Uplift, which occurred in Pennsylvanian time. It is a known fact that precious metals originate from igneous rocks (an igneous intrusion caused the Llano Uplift). The Spanish reported that the gold and silver occurred as pure lumps deposited on limestone cavern walls. If a finger of the Uplift did reach this far to the northwest, it could have deposited gold and silver in limestone caverns, and, what is really significant, *this condition would not normally be looked for by the prospector or mineralogist.* Hence, the country does not look like mining country in the usual sense, but might be very rich.

A fellow named Merrick has lived and prospected in the area off and on for ten or twelve years. He is looking for the mine and the silver bullion. He's nobody's fool. Of course, he is proceeding on his own information. What he knows is his own affair. I personally know nothing of why he has kept at it so long, but I'll bet that he has some pretty conclusive evidence. He is supposed to have found some lode in the area.

I'm sending along the map with this story, and the editor has my express permission to use it. It won't tell you enough to do any good unless you know some facts to go with it.

Am I going to hunt for the stuff? Well, right now I have a wife and three youngsters. I couldn't go looking if I wanted to. You can bet one thing: I'm going to hang on to the dope I have, and every chance I get to learn something more, I'm going to grab it. One of these days I may go down there and dig a bit. After all, at today's prices that silver would be worth about $80,000,000. Worth looking for, don't you think?



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Killer in Fancy Pants

(Continued from page 15)

Over Ab Webster's loud objections, the council promised to give Luke Short a fair deal. When Luke returned to Dodge, he told Earp that the marshal's forces were dead set against him and that he would be run out of Dodge twenty-four hours after Earp left. As a result, there was selected "The Dodge City Peace Commission," appointed to select, in turn, a new group of peace officers for the town.

SHORT went back into business and operated with great success. Luke served occasionally as a law officer himself and helped to tame the freewheeling cow town. In 1885 he sold out and moved to Fort Worth, Texas.

In Fort Worth, Short opened a fancy gambling and drinking emporium called The White Elephant. There was no drink mixed that couldn't be ordered and obtained at the ornate bar of The White Elephant. The place was genteel and respectable, and the well-dressed bartenders behind the mahogany had specific orders not to serve liquor to a kid or to a man who looked as if he couldn't hold it. The gambling was run in the same strict way. Luke Short tolerated no phony faro boxes, no brakes on the roulette wheels, no marked cards or one-way dice.

About 1887, the Reform faction in Fort Worth came up with an edict against all games of chance. Short was about ready to close shop when he remembered past experience with Mayor Webster in Dodge City. He suspected that the local big shots might be pulling a fast one on him, as had the crafty Webster. Luke had the right hunch. Gambling went on behind closed doors, so Luke did the same with his own games.

Actually, the high-sounding Reform movement in Fort Worth was a shakedown racket, backed by high-ups in the city council. Soon the proprietor of The White Elephant was paid a visit by the ring's collector. He said nothing, but held his open, upturned palm suggestively toward Luke Short. Luke ignored him. "All right, mister," snapped the collector. "Shell out for the kitty!"

Luke's small, sad eyes squinted balefully. He jerked a thumb toward the entrance. "Git the hell out of here! I run a square joint and those damn crooks ain't gettin' a dime of my money. Tell 'em Luke Short said so. Now *git!*"

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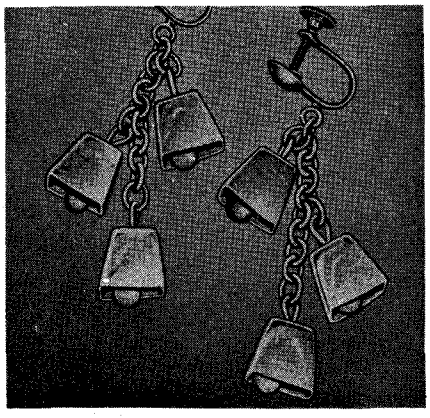

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The collector got.

Jim Courtright, a notorious gunman and ex-convict, was head man of the collecting department for the "Purity League" of Fort Worth. Jim handled the stubborn hard cases himself. The next day after Luke Short had sent his defiant message to the bigwigs, Courtright appeared on the sidewalk in front of The White Elephant and began bragging to the small crowd gathered there of what he was going to do to Luke Short.

News of his impending doom reached the cool little gambler.

"Courtright has to do a certain amount of bragging to convince himself that he's tough," remarked Luke. He rose from the table and headed for the street.

Still blowing off steam to his listeners, Courtright looked up to see Short step from the entrance.

"Looking for me, Jim?" drawled the little gambler.

Courtright stopped talking in mid-brag. The sidewalk crowd scattered. Jim gulped and stammered, "I'm just here to do my duty. Don't draw on me, Luke!"

"Draw on *you*, Jim?" smiled Short. "Look—I'm not even wearing a gun!" The gambler raised the front of his vest in proof. No hardware showed.

Courtright stared in utter disbelief—then a sardonic smile creased his face. Why, this was too good to be true! The famed gunman Luke Short, the "Undertakers' Friend," not packing a gun. . . . Jim's right hand streaked for his Colt.

Seemingly from out of nowhere a gun materialized in Luke's hand. A shot blasted, and Courtright lost a thumb just as he was earing back his six-gun to throw a slug into Short's guts. Desperately, Jim flipped his gun to his left hand. The shift came too late; he died with a bullet between the eyes—the Luke Short trade-mark.

"He was looking for it," commented Luke, as he slipped his pistol back into his hip pocket.

There was some talk of a lynching from Courtright's buddies following his sudden demise, but the talk fizzled out. Maybe the talkers heard who was spending the nights in Luke Short's cell with a pair of Peacemakers belted around his waist—Bat Masterson, who always seemed to show up when his little friend got himself into trouble.

Luke Short was tried for murder and acquitted. The court decided that Courtright had definitely been looking for trouble—and found it.

Wyatt Earp had once remarked, "Some day, boys, the would-be tough guys are goin' to learn to leave that little feller alone." They had learned. Never again was Luke Short molested. The cold-eyed little gent who had brought so much business to the undertakers of the Western frontier continued his gambling career until September 8, 1893. Then, at the early age of 39, he died in bed with his boots off at Queda Springs, Kansas. There was not a scar from knife or bullet wound on the small gunman's body.

THE little gambler and gunman of the old frontier towns is long dead; but his name lives on today in the best-selling Western novels of Frederick Glidden, who has adopted the name of Luke Short as a pen name. Although there is no relationship between the two men, the contemporary Luke Short, like his predecessor, is small in stature—again proving that you can't judge a man by his size. Fred Glidden has made the name of Luke Short famous as one of the best Western novelists of our times.

I Fought at Beecher's Island

(Continued from page 19)

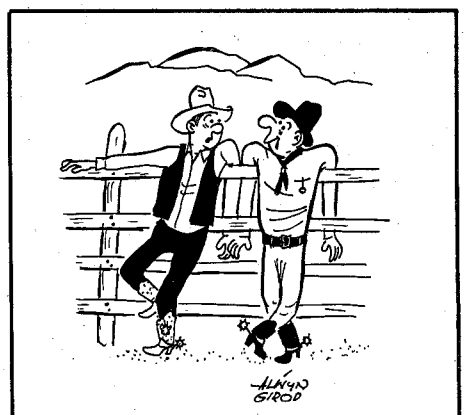
to us, and gave orders to construct another rifle pit upstream. Nine of our best marksmen were placed in this pit before dawn. With instructions to hold their fire until Grover gave the word, these nine men were to concentrate their fire on Roman Nose and the medicine man who would lead the main body of warriors. "We've got to get those two," Grover warned the nine scouts. "Those warriors will follow Roman Nose through hell! Without him to lead them, they'll be easy to beat. The medicine man has told those boys that our rifles can't harm them. It's up to us to prove him wrong."

Sharp paused at this point, then added significantly, "The first man that fires without my orders gets a bullet through his head!"

Near as I could figure it, the next day was the tenth day of the siege. The morning was bright and pleasant. The red snipers were quiet; everything seemed peaceful. Birds sang in the cottonwoods, and even the stink of rotten horses and burned gunpowder didn't seem quite so bad. We weren't fooled by the peaceful scene around us; we knew that all hell was due to bust loose any minute. Knowing that, even our wounded were silent.

About ten o'clock, two horsemen rounded a bend upstream. One—the medicine man—wore a buffalo horn and mask and carried a gourd rattle in his hand. The other was the most splendid warrior I have ever seen—Roman Nose! He was stark naked, except for breechclout, beaded moccasins, cartridge belt, and eagle-plume war bonnet trailing over the rump of his mount—a magnificent chestnut sorrel with cream-colored mane, and a tail which almost swept the sand. The chief, holding a carbine in his upflung right hand, and with face and body daubed with chrome and vermilion, is a picture in my mind that never fades.

A few paces behind the chief and the medicine man rode six braves, three abreast. Behind these riders rode a solid line of braves that filled the bed of the Arickaree from bank to bluff. Behind



"Pulled a fastie on that city dude! Traded the Grand Canyon—to be moved up East, cut up and sold for cellars. I got the Brooklyn Bridge!"

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these, rode yet another line of warriors. Scared as I was, I thrilled at the wild, beautiful sight.

Placing his hand over his mouth, Roman Nose gave the ear-splitting war cry of the Cheyennes. On they charged at a fast gallop. Time froze—it seemed to me that Sharp would never give the word to fire, and that we were sure to be trampled to death under the hoofs of those charging horses. Suddenly Sharp barked, "Fire!" Nine rifles crashed in unison—and before the echo resounded from bluff to bluff, the medicine man was down and gasping out his life on the reddening sands of the Arickaree.

I watched fascinated as Roman Nose toppled slowly from the back of the great sorrel. His death meant my life and the life of every man around me, yet I felt a stab of regret as keen and poignant as a wound.

Six warriors, divided three on a side, swooped down and picked up the fallen war chief by his arms and legs. Up the bluff they rode, carrying him tenderly to a place where it seemed impossible for a horse to climb.

The first line of braves recoiled when they saw the failure of the medicine man's charm to protect their chief. The second line crashed into the first line. All was confusion. The river bed became a bedlam of plunging, floundering horses and men. The scouts in the rear pits opened a deadly fire on this struggling mass of men and horses. Scouts mounting the rim of the pits delivered a withering fire from their seven-shot Spencer rifles and six-shooters. When their guns were empty, they didn't take time to reload but dashed in, using them as clubs to knock the bewildered braves from their horses. The river bed was quickly cleared of Indians—all that remained was a few bodies the survivors hadn't been able to carry off.

We reloaded our guns and returned to the rifle pits, ready to repel a second attack if one was made. No attack was launched. On the next day, Carpenter's command arrived from Fort Wallace, and it was now evident that the battered hostiles had begun to retreat soon after the battle. We searched for the body of Roman Nose, and found it in a cave in the river bluffs, wrapped carefully in a silken buffalo robe. His magnificent war bonnet was never found.

When Death Rode the Jarbidge Stage

(Continued from page 17)

discarded his bloodied shirt and coat. They'll tell you, too, that the $4000 in stolen money was never found, and that it still must lie buried somewhere in the canyon near the lower end of town...

But even this angle of buried loot is not exceptional in the annals of Western stagecoaching and, in the final analysis, the Kuhl case stands unique for only one reason: it marked the closing of an era.

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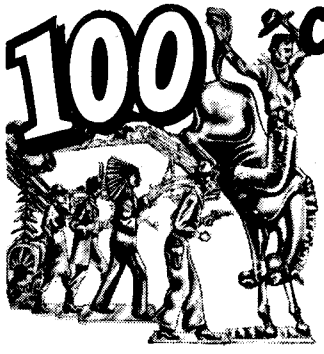

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

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OUTLAWS AND GUNMEN

FAMOUS NORTHWEST MANHUNTS AND MURDER MYSTERIES (Fulco Publications, $3.50) by Hollis B. Fultz, is a highly interesting and well-written account of the notorious outlaws of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana, most of them operating during the present century long after mass-murder had gone out of fashion. The worst of the lot was Henry Plummer, who ranged from California through Idaho and finally met his fate at the end of a rope in Bannack, Montana. His gang is supposed to have murdered nearly a hundred and fifty persons.

Billy Gohl of Grays Harbor, Washington may be less well known but was even more murderous, with more than a hundred killings to his individual credit in the short span of seven years between 1903 and 1910. Harry Tracy was a stick-up artist who shot his way out of the State Penitentiary of Oregon and killed a dozen men before being brought to earth in a wheat field in Central Washington.

Among the others included are the "Wild Man" of Satsop County, Washington, killer of eleven before being hunted down like a wild animal, and Roy Gardiner, the ex-college professor and train-robber. Gardiner, the only man to escape from the Federal Pen on McNeil's Island, took his own life in an obscure San Francisco hotel in 1939.

A SKETCH OF SAM BASS, THE BANDIT (University of Oklahoma Press, $2) with a scholarly and informative introduction by Ramon F. Adams, is the sixth volume in The Western Frontier Library. It was written by Charles L. Martin, a Texas newspaperman, and issued anonymously in 1880. Martin had some first-hand knowledge of his subject, as he was a member of one of the numerous posses that attempted to capture Bass. Much of his book, however, appears to have been drawn from contemporary newspaper accounts and from interviews with people who knew or claimed to have known the bandit.

Bass refused to talk about his exploits, even after he was mortally wounded, and consequently the author had little first-hand information about what really took place in connection with the gang's several bank and train robberies. While the book does not rank very high as literature, the extreme rarity of the story in its original edition makes this reprint of interest to many collectors.

Victor M. Rose's THE TEXAS VENDETTA; OR, THE SUTTON-TAYLOR FEUD (Frontier Press, $2.50) is a reprint of the exceedingly rare 1880 edition. This is a brief account of the troubles in South Texas during reconstruction days with a cast of characters that includes, in addition to the Suttons and Taylors, Jack Helm, Capt. McNelly, Governor Davis, Judge Pleasants, Senator Pridgen, and John Wesley Hardin. With such a cast, action aplenty is assured. Sixteen photographs from the famous Rose collection have been added to the one Onderdonk drawing used to illustrate the original edition.

QUANTRILL AND THE BORDER WARS (Pageant, $7.50) by William E. Connelley is an offset reprint of the long out-of-print 1909 edition with a highly informative introduction by Homer Croy. Connelley, the well-known Kansas historian, is revealed as a man of much prejudice who really hated Quantrill. Croy doubts that such a man could write an objective appraisal of Quantrill and his times. But he readily admits that Connelley wrote a very fascinating book that despite its faults, deserves a wider distribution. We agree. It is of James and Younger interest and was the choice of the Civil War Book Club for July.

RANGE LIFE

Stanley Walker's HOME TO TEXAS (Harper, $4) is a thoroughly delightful book by a talented newspaperman—a native Texan who had made good in a tough game in New York. Walker, fed up with city life, went HOME TO TEXAS in 1945 and despite the predictions of his city friends and the doubts of the stay-at-home natives is still there, thank you. The book is a wonderful mixture of tales of the past of Lampasas County with accounts of present-day experiences of the Walkers on their small ranch. Some of the chapters appeared in *The New Yorker* but they'll easily stand another reading. Don't miss this one.

GRASSLANDS OF THE GREAT PLAINS, THEIR NATURE AND USE (Johnson Publishing Co., $5) by J. E. Weaver and F. W. Albertson, brings together practically everything of importance that is known about the vast mid-continent prairie between Saskatchewan and the Rio Grande. It is a book that grassland technicians and ranchers alike will want to own. Much of the information is the result of the lifetime work of the authors, although the studies of many other authorities have been credited and interwoven into the text to provide a comprehensive account of the Great Plains vegetation.

The subject of drought and its effects on the Great Plains vegetation is treated at length and the authors draw on their own exhaustive research over many years to describe the dramatic changes that take place in the grassland during extended dry periods. Why certain grasses are most affected by drought is explained and the reader is told which ones are the first to recover, and the effect of dust storms and of too heavy use. Here, the range or ranch manager will find innumerable practical hints that will enable him to help protect the land against the ravages of drought and to speed its recovery with the return of wetter years.

For most of us, the Great Plains is too vast an area to comprehend as a whole, and the authors have wisely included separate chapters on the grasslands of most of the Plains States, as well as one on the mixed prairie in Canada. The account of the mixed prairie in Texas was contributed by B. W. Allred (one of THE OLD BOOKAROOS).

No mere recital of the contents of this book could do justice to the wealth of valuable information it contains. It is an important contribution to range literature.

Robert W. Fenwick's RED FENWICK'S WEST, (Sage, $3.50) is by one of the West's best interpreters. The material for this lively book comes from his columns, "Ridin' the Range," which he writes for *The Denver Post*. Red's West extends from the Big Horn Basin in Wyoming to the Mexican Border and he has made most of the important cattle trails and water holes in this big country.

Red writes entertainingly and sympathetically about the past and present, including incidents about cowpunchers, sheepherders, hotels, school teachers, badmen, lawmen, miners, and horses. Recommended.

INDIANS

THE BASKET WEAVERS OF ARIZONA (University of New Mexico Press, $7.50) by Bert Robinson, is a beautifully illustrated book about the eight basket-weaving tribes of that State. There are 73 black and white plates plus 14 in full color from photographs by Robert H. Peebles. In addition to the fascinating story of the basket weavers, the book contains much historical information about the various tribes. This is good Americana as well as a fine book about one of the oldest Indian crafts. Definitely a collector's must.

HISTORY OF THE DAKOTA OR SIOUX INDIANS (Ross and Haines, $8.75) by Deane Robinson is the first title in the Mid-American Series of reprints and with this magnificent start the project should bring a vast quantity of interesting history to Americana readers. This book covers a maze of Sioux history during the period starting with the Lewis and Clark expedition and ending with the Wounded Knee Massacre and the death of Crazy Horse at Fort Robinson. There's a nice speculative bit about the possible Mongolian ancestry of the Sioux.

Tireless research went into the production of this instructive book about a rugged period when lurking Indians lifted scalps and lawless men preyed upon the weak and unwary. There's considerable detail on the great Sioux warriors and strategists and you'll find some frank revelations that remove glitter from some historical figures that have been played up for more than they're worth. The intrepid Indian Agent, Lawrence Taliferro, receives the favorable recognition he justly deserves but seldom gets.

THE HOPI INDIANS (Caxton, $5) by Harry C. James is a highly satisfactory narrative about the "People of Peace" by an adopted member of the tribe. It covers, with an unusual economy of words, the land, the people, the customs, the crafts and the ceremonies. And at the end the authors put into English some of the best loved Hopi folktales.

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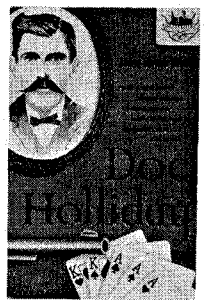

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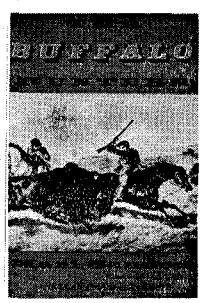

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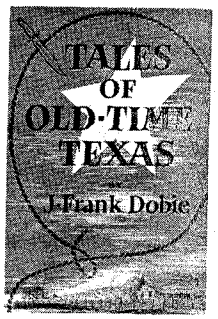

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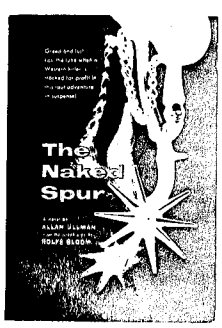

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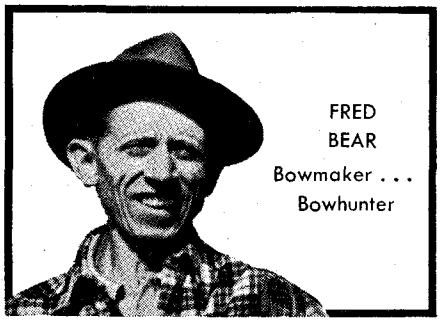

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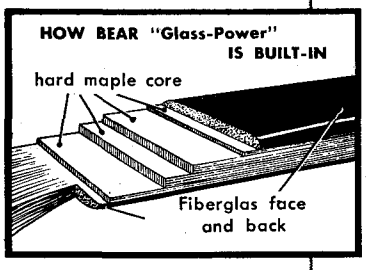

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The illustrator, Don Perceval, is also an adopted member of the tribe. James was born in Canada and Perceval in England, but each has earned the right to be both a Westerner and a Hopi. Worthwhile.

WESTERN WRITERS

BAY WINDOW BOHEMIA (Doubleday, $3.75) by Oscar Lewis is an account of the brilliant artistic life of gas-lit San Francisco. The book covers the lively period between 1890 and the San Francisco Fire in 1906 when the city served as a training ground for many budding writers, musicians, actors, and artists. There are brief informative word sketches of these people and of several folk heroes. This galaxy includes Jack London, Joaquin Miller, David Warfield, Isadora Duncan, David Belasco, Will Irwin, Frank Norris, Ambrose Bierce, Robert Aitken, Gertrude Atherton, George Sterling, Edwin Markham and Gelett Burgess.

The roistering escapades of these colorful citizens as well as their artistic contributions are set down. It is good reading and soundly instructive.

CHARLES F. LUMMIS, EDITOR OF THE SOUTHWEST ($5) by Edwin R. Bingham is another fine volume in the Huntington Library Publications in Western History. The author states that it is not a biography of Lummis or a history of the great regional magazine, *Out West*. Yet it is both—for a clear image of Lummis, the writer, the crusader, and the winner over a series of serious bodily ills shines through. And *Out West* gets the full treatment—the editorial policy of Lummis, the financial difficulties, the writers, and the illustrators. There are biographical sketches of many of the contributors, including Mary Austin, Sharlot Hall, Eugene Manlove Rhodes, Maynard Dixon, and Ed Borein. There is a good bibliography and several illustrations. Definitely worthwhile.

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The Salt War of Texas

(Continued from page 21)

with Father Bourgad several times, and violence was averted on each occasion. The priest acted as mediator between Howard and the mob.

The Army board found justification for the mob's anger in protesting the wanton murder of Cardis by Howard. The board sharply criticized the type of men summarily enlisted as Texas Rangers and organized into a makeshift posse. They labeled Cardis' death, "premeditated murder." Father Bourgad was credited with saving Howard's life at San Elizario prior to the final and fatal episode. The board branded the hastily organized group of Rangers as containing lawless elements that interfered with proper conduct on the part of the posse as a whole. Further, the board recommended that a permanent Army post be set up near El Paso to prevent any violence in the future. As a direct result, Congress acted to set up the permanent post of Fort Bliss nearby.

Thus everything was in upheaval, in the El Paso Valley, and it all came about because of salt. Everything, that is, except the salt beds themselves, which continued to ooze quietly under the noonday sun. They still do.

Truly Western

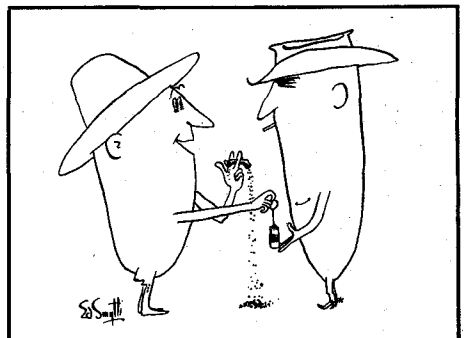
(Continued from page 29)

were made. It is our bet that you will hear favorable comments from a large number of both fact hunters and folklore fans on the *Slaughter*. Your Western viewpoint merits the praise.

The TW editorial staff and Francis Dickie may take a bow, too, for *Buffalo Comeback*. It is a very appropriate follow-up for the feature article, which it complements—and compliments. *Buffalo Comeback* is a true comeback in the nick of time before some of us get riled up to the point where we are ready to throw Grampaw's old Sharps Fifty down the well and then commit a canine nuisance on the headboard of the old man's grave; then start writing to our Congressman and demanding a bounty on Army brass of the Sheridan stripe. *Buffalo Comeback* is a lesson in optimism for some of us old pessimists who are inclined to think all of our natural resources have suffered beyond rescue.

For those of us who have lived in Alaska and the Yukon, particularly, and others who think of those places as being a part of the West (Alaska extends farther west than the Hawaiian Islands), Charlie McKenzie's *Haze Over Chilkoot* brings nostalgic recollections or a desire to follow the trails of those old stampeders. One story which has not been told is the story of cattle driving in Alaska and Yukon Territories. Thousands of head of cattle were shipped to Pyramid Harbor and Valdez following Carmack's Klondike discovery. From those ports the beeves were trailed inland to the gold camps. Maybe Charlie McKenzie remembers some of the stockmen who made their drives before the dressed-beef business made them hang up their saddles.

In the interest of circulation a popular magazine may offer a portion of its



"Thank you. Now may I borrow a match?"

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column space to readers of Hollywood-Radio-TV intellectual caliber. John Jobson's article with pictures of Al Jennings probably has convinced those blood-and-thunder addicts that that was "The Way They *Really* Did It."

Lost mines and buried treasure are as much a part of the West—in legend, dream and hope, at least—as wide plains and tall mountains—and taller yarns. *Spirit Curse of the Lost Frenchman's Gold* and *Dutchman's Lost Mine Found?* give an accurate balance between a legend-based-on-fact story and a fact-based-on-legend account of two of the West's found-and-lost gold lodes. (We found George R. Monagan's story more interesting and his Western viewpoint more satisfying than the mystery-packed, thrill jammed, Zane Grey-ish nerve-tingler which Barney Barnard, "an old, broken-down cowboy nearly seventy years old . . . with less than a fifth grade education," slanted toward goggle-eyed Eastern dudes and his corn-shucking compatriots from Iowa (TRUE WEST, August, 1955). We do not doubt that, by now, Barney may believe his own yarn. We have seen his kind in the West from Nome southward for several generations.

Another fair balance was struck between Everett Bair's *Queen of the Utes,* and Jack Derden's *Nineteen Months with the Comanches.* Both stories illustrate the old Western saying that the frontier was "hell on women and horses."

Forbes Parkhill paid generous tribute to Midnight, the Buckingest Bronc. It is fortunate that the heyday of that old black bucker was prior to the time of short time limit rides and labor-union riding rules. The boys who tackled Midnight when he was in his prime were professional contest riders who matched their strength and skill against horses instead of stop-watches. There was then a fair basis for judging riding *and* bucking. It is interesting, too, to speculate upon the comparison between Midnight's predecessor, Steamboat, and the kicking horses which are labeled "broncs" in modern shows. More difficult would be an attempt to make a comparison between the cowmen-turned-contestants of Steamboat's day and the "cowboys" seen at the "rode-ee-ohs" nowadays . . .

Renegade Battalion, by Rivers Lodge, stirs up a recollection (hazy and incomplete) of an old tune sung by an older generation in commemoration of the heroism of *The Maid of Monterrey,* the merciful *senorita* who soothed the death anguish and pangs of wounded countrymen and foemen alike:

The moon was shining brightly
Across the battle plain;
The gentle breeze kissed lightly
The features of the slain.
Our guns had hushed their thunder,
Our drums in silence lay,
When came that *senorita,*
The Maid of Monterrey

(Memory fails us after the first stanza. But the old song goes on to laud the compassion of the Mexican girl who brought a measure of comfort to both American and Mexican victims of the battle.)

The only trouble with Fred Gipson's writing is that he doesn't do enough of it for TRUE WEST. The *Cu-ne-va Ghost* is a mighty fine sample of what Fred might do if the TW staff would put a twitch on the nose of Jose Chiquito (Joe Small to you *gabachos)* to make him stand still long enough for Fred to

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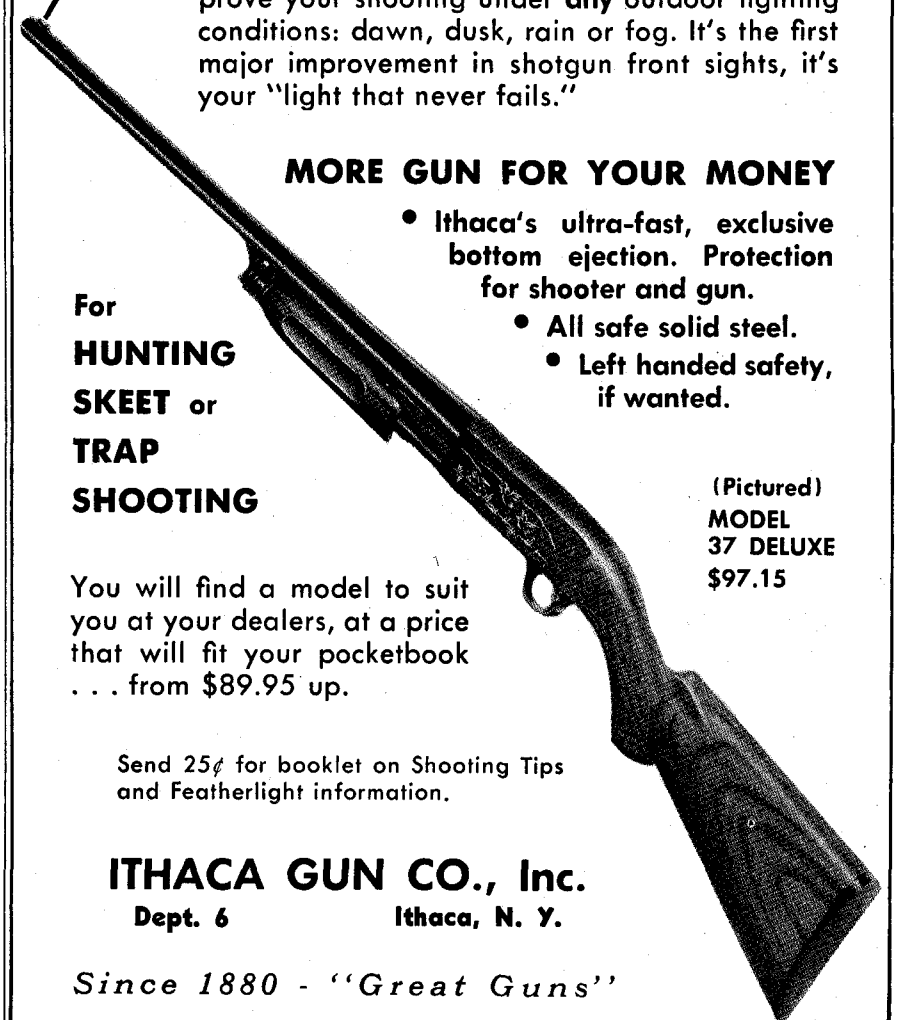

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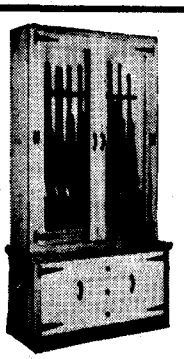

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cut loose. There are too few "authentic liars" left to keep them hobbled. Why doesn't TW start an old-fashioned windy contest between Fred and S. Omar Barker? Let 'em pick out houndogs, cows, *caballos,* varmints or whatever they take a notion to yarn about. In their own lingo, of course. (An "authentic liar" is a feller who can air out the truth and season it up so you won't gag when you swaller it. An amateur liar is one who takes the rankest kind of mendacity, soaks in dime-store adjectives, coats it with sugar-loaded superlatives and dishes it out for the honest-to-gosh truth. Then, when the sugar comes off, it makes you feel like you had breakfast with a buzzard—or a tumblebug).

Last, but certainly not deserving the least mention, are the Old Bookaroos. In the April TW they remain consistent in their able selection and appraisal of books concerning the West which lay far, far beyond the smoke-clouded, bloodboggy land of romance where tall, handsome heroes rode through purple sage and holly wood to rescue paragons of virtue from evil-visaged monsters who lusted for ill-gotten root of evil, forty-rod whiskey and other people's steers.

I can't think of any more damage to do right now, so I'll let you rest your eyes—and your aching head maybe. Best luck to you and Mrs. Norm. *Adios*—Bob Robertson, P. O. Box 335, Carson City, Nevada.

Attention, Author John Jobson!

Dear Mr. Wiltsey:

I am writing you as a constant reader of TRUE WEST and of your own excellent articles and as one who, like yourself, approves of accuracy in the type of material presented in the magazine.

That is why I was disappointed at your not using your editorial blue pencil on "The Way They *Really* Did It" by John Jobson. . . . I won't comment on the photographs of holster and belt—you'll probably get dozens of letters from the gun-bugs on those. I would like to see verification of the following: "At an early age, when knocking around Dodge City and Abilene, he saw Wild Bill Hickok and Bat Masterson . . . Nor is this an old man's idle pipe dream, for it is on the record that Jennings has met most of the old-time law officers and badmen. He was, in particular, buddies with Billy the Kid."

I would like to know to what "record" Mr. Jobson refers. Since Jennings was twelve years old when Wild Bill was killed in Deadwood in 1876, I doubt that he ever saw Hickok. He may have met Masterson in later years when Bat was a newspaper man, "loading" such gullible glory-seekers as Fred Sutton. I would like proof from that "record" that Jennings was ever in Abilene during its heyday.

As for his being buddies with Billy the Kid—that takes the rag off the bush! Again I want to see the "record."

Frankly, I'm a little weary of such Bull-corn. Al Jennings, for many years now, has spread malarky about his having been a big, bad outlaw (which he never was) and a gunfighter. "Twenty affairs of that nature," writes Mr. Jobson. Whom did he ever fight?

The Oklahoma records are clear on Jennings; why not use them? He was strictly small-time and lasted quick. Yours for closer checking—John P. O'Reilly, 690 8th Avenue, San Francisco 18, California.

Stories of Northwestern Ghost Towns Wanted

To the Editors:

Recently I was given a number of back issues of TRUE WEST, and I wouldn't part with them for a half interest in the Lost Duchman Mine. One of the stories that impressed me most was *Ghosts of Gold and Glory* in the July-August, 1955 issue. Let's have more such stories of ghost towns, and preferably by the same author.

I became a lost-mine addict and ghost-town haunter back in '48 when I lived a year in the last great wilderness area near Thunder Mountain in Idaho. I heard several first-hand accounts of mines and Indian legends concerning same—and, as a result, will never be the same again. Maybe the old-timers who read TRUE WEST will help me (with hints at least) in finding some of the ghost towns in the three Northwestern states, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. I'd like information and maps or drawings as to the location of all ghost towns possible of exploration, and above all, general descriptions of the type of surrounding land and if water for drinking is available.

Would also be a big help if someone would mention the nearest towns and the distances between points. Or better still, maybe TRUE WEST could print us ghost disturbers a map with all known ghost towns spotted. Maybe Nell Murbarger could help draw up such a map. If space does not permit such a large, comprehensive map, TW could print a different state map in consecutive issues so everybody will be happy. In closing, may I say that I'd appreciate letters from fellow ghost town disturbers. Thank you—Mrs. Edward Fuhrman, 1585 Elm Street, Clarkston, Washington.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

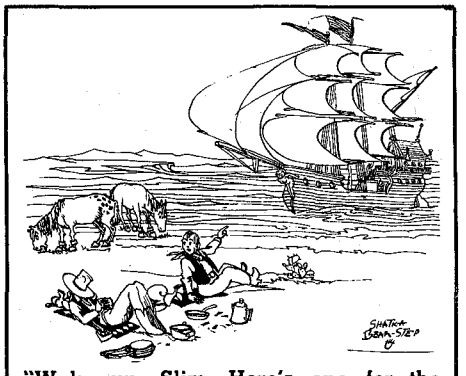
Mrs. Fuhrman has a good idea. Anybody know where such ghost town maps might be obtained?

Correction from Zoe Tilghman

Dear Mr. Gipson:

I have had several complimentary letters on the letter of mine you printed in the April issue of TRUE WEST. One, however, is a criticism, and I suppose a correction is due.

I stated that the Canadian National Railroad had no lines in the U.S. A retired railroad man in Cleveland, Ohio, informs me that this is wrong. The old Grand Trunk Railway crossed lower Michigan, and has a branch to Toledo, Ohio. It was built in the 1870's. However,



"Wake up, Slim. Here's one for the books!"

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this does not materially affect the statements in my letter. It was not the *Canadian National* until the 1920's—long after the James gang had ceased its operations.

I trust that you can find space for this correction part of my letter.—Zoe A. Tilghman, 3130 N. Barnes, Oklahoma City 12, Okla.

Adele G. Solomon Replies to Zoe Tilghman

Editor TRUE WEST:

Just received the April issue of your very fine magazine. I am enjoying it immensely, even to the "attack" on my letter to you in February issue. My! My! How I did get things jumbled up, didn't I? I'm almost beginning to wonder if there ever was a "Jesse James." Only I happen to *know* there *was*.

Well, now, to get to all the statements of which I am accused of being in error.

I know nothing whatever about the *Pictorial History of the World West*. A lot of those pictures and books might be just as "questionable" as my story of Jesse James. Let's take a look at this letter of mine that kicked up such a fuss in certain quarters.

I related the legend about one of Jesse James' men working for my grandfather, and the saga ensuing from that fact. I am no historian, and am not old enough to relate these things from first-hand experience. I only related what was told my mother's family by my grandfather, and *he* knew how to tell the truth.

I know nothing about a picture of Jesse James holding a gun with an extended arm.

The train robbery in Ohio was part of the story sworn to by the man who worked for my family, and claimed to have some of the loot. The "take" was $180,000. One-third of $180,000 is $60,000, not $80,000 as erroneously stated by my self-appointed "critic." There were THREE men involved in the robbery, as I stated in my letter.

I did NOT say that one "saddle tramp" carried $60,000 in silver concealed on a horse. That is really too ridiculous to even mention. But four or five men could have carried it on horseback and concealed it in our timberland.

As to a Geiger counter, it is quite possible that old Jesse may have had a "mineral locator" in mind when he told me to go over the timberland with some such gadget. Having never used one, I know nothing about either gadget. I simply reported what the old man said.

This letter in your April issue, written by some woman in Oklahoma, discredits everything I wrote you in my account of meeting with Jesse James—and *I mean* Jesse James. Let's get the record straight on this.

I don't care what she strings along on my account. It's sort of laughable! I am probably a great deal younger than she is, and she is better educated in the facts of the Old West. I merely sent you a saga that has been handed down in my family and which has never been doubted. I thought it would add a bit of interest to your TRULY WESTERN column, but since it has caused such repercussions with at least one reader, I am sorry I sent it in.

I still am confident of the authenticity of the Jesse Woodson James who rode down the sunset trail, August 15, 1951. I knew some old Indian agents

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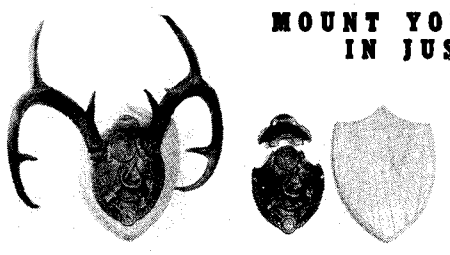

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from the Ozark country and thereabouts —I have letters from one of them—who knew Jesse James *very* well and had visited him at the Merremac Caverns.

Incidentally, I knew Geronimo, and I also witnessed the assassination of President McKinley. I *could* have written something on that—but I would probably have been discredited on that also. Maybe I'll send it in to the *Woman's Temperance Union* or *The Country Gentleman,* Ha! Ha!

Wishing you lots of success—Adele G. Solomon, 1711 Grismer Avenue, Burbank, Calif.

Good Letter on the Kid Curry Mystery

Dear Mr. Wiltsey:

I was much interested in the letters and comments, including your own, on Kid Curry. Really, I'm not so much interested in our old outlaws as I am in the history of the trail-driving, open range days. Actually, however, the two subjects overlap to the degree that it is sometimes impossible to separate them. For example, all the so-called Wild Bunch were top-hand cowboys, who worked from Washington State to Dakota and from Montana down to Arizona and New Mexico. Their fascinating and complex records can be traced through a number of fine, first-hand accounts of those hectic days, such as Jack Culley's *Cattle, Horses and Men.*

I think anyone interested in Kid Curry should read Chapter Nine, pages 164-178, of Ross Santee's grand book *Lost Pony Tracks,* in which Jim Thornhill, Kid Curry's partner in the Little Rockies, in Montana, tells what I believe to be some of the facts about the Kid. Thornhill states that the Kid was still alive (this was some years ago) and I go along with him, since I don't agree with the stories that state the Kid killed himself at Parachute, Colorado. Let's examine what facts we have. James D. Horan, in *Pictorial History of the Wild West,* gives what he purports to be the facts, compiled mainly from the Pinkerton records. Let's face it—the Pinkertons didn't do too well where the Wild Bunch was concerned.

It is sometimes with an amused smile that we read "so and so escaped to South America." Actually, a good many outlaws of the 1890's did just that, including, of course, Cassidy and Longbaugh. The Pinkertons certainly goofed on THEM!

According to Horan's dates, Kid Curry escaped from Knoxville, Tennessee, June 27, 1903, and, after a train robbery near Parachute, Colorado, July 7, 1903, died by his own hand. Though the date is not given, it is described as the second day of the posse's chase, either the 8th or 9th of July.

We are told that Kid Curry pulled off this robbery to get passage money to join Cassidy and Longbaugh in South America. Horan writes: "After the escape he fled to Montana, then to Colorado." Doesn't track out to me. Why should the Kid flee from Tennessee to Montana, where he had friends, and then to Colorado to rob a train? What were the vaunted Pinks doing during this time? Kid Curry was apparently in excellent health when he broke jail on June 27, yet on July 8 or 9 the corpse is described: "His face was sunken in and he looked as if he had been sick." Several townspeople of nearby Glenwood Springs, where the body was taken, identified the robber as Tap Duncan "who worked for a Texas outfit."

Shortly thereafter the Pinkertons sent their man, Lowell Spence, to identify the disinterred body. To quote: "Spence took one look. 'That's Kid Curry,' he said."

Certainly if the Kid had escaped the country and was en route to South America, as Thornhill and others believed, it didn't look very good for the Pinkertons, who at this time knew that Cassidy and Longbaugh were already down in South America. It was to their advantage to find a convenient patsy, and I believe this train robber was it.

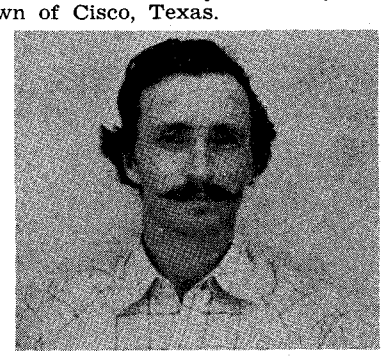
Another thing: On page 198 of Horan's book is an enlargement of a Curry photo used on page 228. Notice the left ear, which is quite clear in the enlargement. The ear is well defined and fleshy, like my own, for example. Now look on page 229, at the photo of the Parachute train robber. The left ear clearly shows—to my way of thinking—an extremely different ear than that displayed in the authentic photo of Curry. This other is a shell-like, almost lobeless ear. Just one point worth noting.

What a pity they didn't have fingerprint identification in those days!

I certainly think that D. H. Vance, of Provo, Utah, had his facts correct in his TRULY WESTERN letter . . . I hope that someday someone will do a book correlating all the very elusive information on the Wild Bunch, including Mr. Horan's story of Cassidy's and Longbaugh's last days in South America. Such a book could supplement Kelly's *The Outlaw Trail,* published in 1938, a scarce item now.—John P. O'Reilly, 690 8th Avenue, San Francisco 18, California.

FOLKS, MEET RANDY STEFFEN!

Many TRUE WEST readers have written in asking questions about Randy Steffen, our crack illustrator. Here you see the ol' boy as he appeared in the 1956 Cisco Fiesta, which celebrated the 75th Anniversary of Randy's home town of Cisco, Texas.



One of the leading promotors of the affair, Randy worked for weeks designing costumes, hunting up an old chuckwagon to use in the parade, etc. Every male in Cisco of whisker-growing age let his hair and beard grow to present an authentic frontier days' appearance during the Fiesta. Randy passed up the title of The Cisco Kid, as movie star Duncan Renaldo has already pre-empted the name and role of O'Henry's famous character. As sort of a consolation title he received the name, "The Handle-bar Kid." Appropriate, as you can see.

This Steffen *hombre* is a colorful gent in his own right, being a direct descendant of Tasunka Witko (Crazy Horse), the fighting leader of the Oglala Sioux who led his tribesmen in the defeat of General Crook at the battle of the Rosebud, and in the annihilation of Custer and his Seventh Cavalry at the Little

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Big Horn only a few days later (June 25, 1876).

Steffen articles and drawings appear regularly in WESTERN HORSEMAN and other Western magazines. So far, TRUE WEST has only managed to rope him long enough to do us occasional illustrations and covers, but we still have hopes of getting him to do an article for us. That is, if he ever stops high-tailing around the West performing such hard chores as acting as judge at Indian girl beauty contests. Lucky cuss helped select Miss Indian America of 1955 at Sheridan, Wyoming, last year.

Randy is the spittin' image of a flinty-eyed old-timer, and he is, in fact, always surrounded by the authentic atmosphere of the old West. He works in a studio overflowing with fascinating mementoes of frontier days. A huge buffalo robe hangs on one wall, flanked by a magnificently spreading set of horns that once adorned the head of a Texas longhorn steer. Winchesters, Sharps, Springfield carbines, old Frontier Colt six-guns, cavalry sabers, plumed Indian lances, rawhide quirts, spurs, a large collection of branding-irons: these are only part of the innumerable models he uses to make his Western drawings and paintings so authentic you can almost *smell* the dust and acrid powder smoke of his battle scenes and hear the thunder rolling from the driving hoofs of his charging horses! He makes the old West come alive before your eyes, and that, *amigos,* is true art.

Here's Randy himself telling how he does it:

Dear Joe:

Well sir, the cover painting is finished, and I'm well pleased with the way it turned out. I made a couple of photos during the process of painting this one. Perhaps the readers would be interested in a brief description of the work involved in turning out a TRUE WEST cover.

One photo shows the man who posed for Roman Nose, wearing a war-bonnet

that was actually used in the Custer fight. I was lucky enough to fall heir to this bonnet about a year ago, after trying to get it for a long time. The model is Elmo Evans, who owns the Evans Transport Company here in Cisco, and has a pretty strong infusion of Indian blood in his veins, although he's not a Cheyenne.

The carbine is a New Model 1863 Sharps, with typical brass nail-head decoration on the stock and forearm. The quirt dangling from Evans' right

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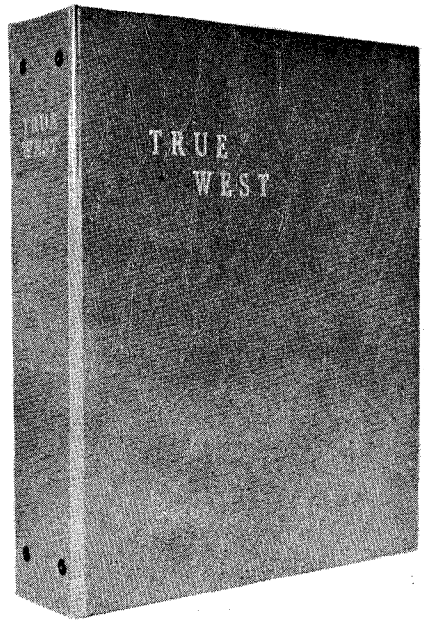

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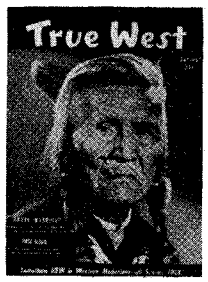

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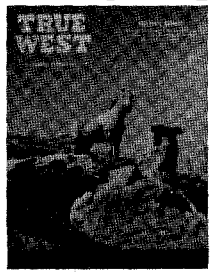

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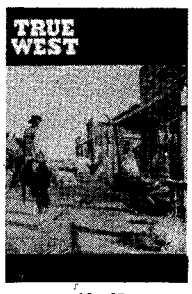

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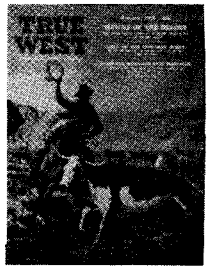

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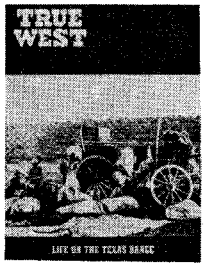

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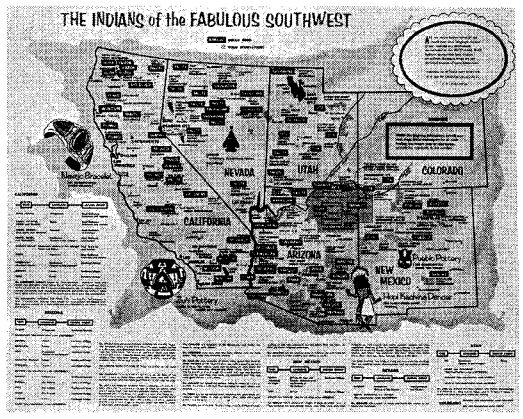

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arm is an old Cheyenne quirt, made of wood and soft rawhide. . .

Of course, this bonnet is not a trailer type, so I had to add the trailer in the painting. The cartridge belt is an old canvas one, used back in Roman Nose's time by the cavalry.

The Medicine Man model is a half-breed Cherokee named Red Calloway, also from Cisco. Red's daddy was an Irishman, and his mamma was a Cherokee woman. I had to darken his Irish skin considerably with makeup, but I sure didn't have to do anything with his features or build. I have a buffalo hide hanging here in the studio, and I was mightily tempted to cut a piece off it for the Medicine Man's buffalo headdress, but since this hide was from a buffalo my Grandpa shot back in 1874,

I decided against being too authentic about painting from the real thing . . . consequently, the beach towel shaped on the model's head. The knife scabbard is a very old plains scabbard, made sometime in the 1850's—rawhide, with bead decoration. The sign Red is making in the photo is the universal sign language symbol for the word "dead"—an appropriate gesture for this particular story! (I FOUGHT AT BEECHER'S ISLAND)

The scene of the cover painting is the Cheyennes' first approach toward the entrenched scouts on the island. Both Roman Nose and the Medicine Man are singing their war chants, and the lines of warriors behind them are waiting for the signal to charge. I don't show too many guns in the hands of the warriors, because I don't believe they were too well equipped with firearms at that time. Even as late as the Custer fight on the Little Big Horn in 1876, it is estimated that not more than a third of the Sioux and Cheyennes had more than bows, arrows and lances. The old bull about the Indians being armed with modern Winchesters was grossly exaggerated. There were a few 1866 models, but most of the Indian firearms in the Custer fight were ancient muzzle-loaders, and few breech-loaders. Iron Hail told me just a few months before he died that he used a flintlock in the battle, and from the description, it was an ancient trade gun —not much account even when it was new.

So much for that. The illustrations for Norm's Comanche piece are on the drawing board now, and will be shipped off to you tomorrow.

Adios for now,
Randy

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POKER ALICE

By Nino Lo Bello

HER gambling trademark consisted of a wooden face and a thick black cigar planted in the middle of it. On the job she usually wore a campaign hat and a loaded forty-five snugged against her hips. Though she parlayed a special knack at cards into winnings that totaled a half-million dollars, she finished up broke. Just before she died at the age of 79, under a surgeon's knife, she told the doctor: "Go ahead and operate—it's all in the draw."

Such was Poker Alice, the toughest female gambler America ever spawned. A four-star attraction in the frontier towns of yesteryear, Poker Alice lured crowds from all longitudes and latitudes to her green-baized work-bench where she matched wits and inside straights with the coolest, most calculating card sharks in the business. Put a deck in her hands, and she turned into a female apparently without nerves, for she never smiled when she won nor changed her expression when she lost.

Once in New Mexico she breezed into a gambling hall with a ten-dollar bill and won the first bet at a faro table. She doubled her wager and won again. Thus started one of the longest "dutchies" (winning streak) ever recorded. Soon the other tables were deserted as the mob ganged up to behold the sweating dealer drop hand after hand to Alice. Finally the gambler lost his nerve and declared the bank closed.

Without counting her money Poker Alice assumed his chair and barked, "Gentlemen, the game's open and the sky's the limit." Word spread to the other gambling joints, and soon nearly everybody in town had descended on the saloon to test Alice's luck. But the speckled pasteboards were good to Alice; at dawn when the game petered out, she walked from the smoky room with her original ten-spot and an additional $10,000 profit.

Years later as a white-haired matron she still called a spade a spade when she told an interviewer her philosophy: "We are all gamblers. Some stake theirs in mines, some try it in goods, some attempt cattle. Others flush their luck with a pan in a stream. The only Flush that paid off for me was to be found in a deck of cards and a hot game of stud poker."

Poker Alice was born Alice Ivers in 1851 in Sudbury, England. After an education in a ritzy girl's school, she hopped to America with her father, a teacher. She was a slight woman, pretty, with pale-blue eyes and a thatch of blond hair. At 19 she married Frank Duffield, a mining engineer, with whom she settled in Colorado. To escape boredom in the raw mining towns, she would watch her husband gamble in the saloons at night. And when Duffield was killed in a mine accident a few years later, Alice took to the ace of spades as her visible means of support.

Although gold and silver flowed like Niagara (sometimes a pot would hold over $20,000), Poker Alice made a fetish of never playing a crooked game in her life. One time she met up with a phoney dealer, and after realizing she was losing steadily because he was cheating, she jammed her forty-five into the culprit's neck.

"If you had slid that card from the bottom of the deck cleverly," she rasped at him, "I wouldn't kick. Sometimes I admire a clever crook. But I have no use for a clumsy bastard like you. Now hand me back all my dough or I'll shoot off your puss."

It was incidents of this type that made Alice the doll of Colorado. But in 1889 she migrated to the Cherokee Strip in Oklahoma where for two years she dealt a mean game of faro and stud poker before bolting to Arizona. Colorado got her back when a fabulous vein of silver was discovered in Creede. Alice was among the early arrivals. Bob Ford, who shot Jesse James in the back, hired Alice in his saloon.

IT WAS at Deadwood, a few years later, that she found her next husband in an incident reminiscent of a Hollywood script. Working in the same bistro with her at the next table was one W. G. Tubbs, a smooth dealer who competed for customers in a sharp rivalry with Alice. One night a drunken miner, who accused Tubbs of cheating, unsheathed a wicked blade and lunged at the luck-merchant.

As he went to slash the gamester's throat, a shot boomed out and the knife plopped from the miner's hand. Alice had sizzled a forty-five slug through the would-be assailant's arm. While still she held the smoking revolver, Tubbs proposed marriage to her, and shortly after they wed to settle down on a chicken farm. But Tubbs died of pneumonia in 1910 and Alice returned to the gambling tables to become the Queen of Clubs.

In time she opened her own betting club and married George Huckert after estimating she owed him over a thousand dollars. "All I had was about $50 on hand," Poker Alice told a friend, "So I got to figuring it would be cheaper to marry him than pay him off." After Huckert's death a few years later, Poker Alice got involved in the killing of a drunken cavalryman who tried to force his way into her saloon.

She was acquitted of the charge of murder, but the town reformers closed up her "establishment" for good. Alice spent her last years in retirement in a small clapboard house in Sturgis, Colorado. Abandoning her big black cigar and the forty-five, Alice passed her remaining days dressed in a black skirt and an Army blouse; she kept her white hair twisted in an old-fashioned bun. But she never quite gave up her beloved deck of cards. For up until she cashed in her chips in 1930, she managed to play several dozen hands of solitaire every day.

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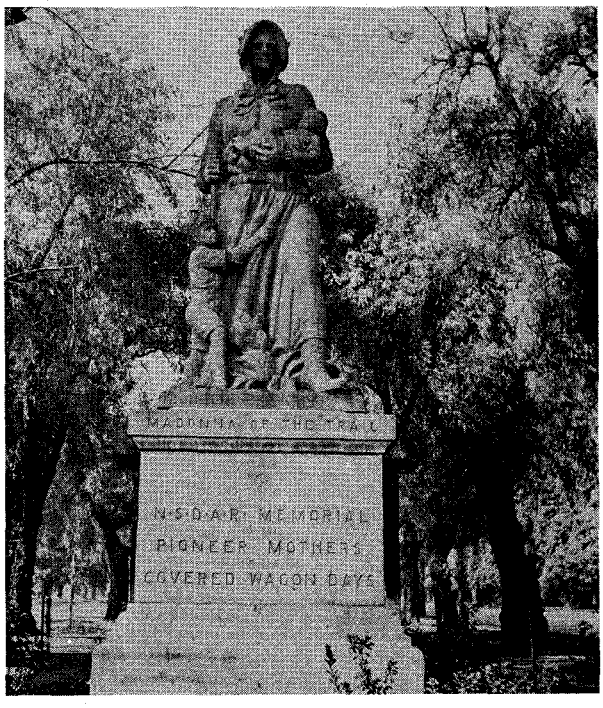
MADONNA OF THE TRAIL

By Harold L. Monroe

Her big, work-hardened hand curled around the soft, round bottom of the infant child cradled in her muscular arm, she strides determinedly on. In twelve 18 ft. statues in a dozen different states, stretching from Maryland to California through which the old emigrant trails led ever Westward, the Pioneer Mother of Covered Wagon Days is thus sculptured in classic stone. Her heavy, scuffed shoes show no daintily designed open toes. Her unshapely mother hubbard dress, swishing loosely about her strong body, presents plenty of wrinkled folds for her boy-child to clutch as he trudges along beside her.

This plodding mother had scant time to spend on the styles that society prescribed or to fuss around with feminine niceties. There weren't even any restrooms along the way to afford a bit of privacy and comfort in her attention to cleanliness and the natural bodily needs. And being a woman she deserves great admiration and deep respect for this alone. Quite often there was hardly enough water to spare even a dab for her weathered face, let alone perfumed soap or bath salts or any of the other toiletries the modern woman takes for granted.



The men in the wagon trains were hardy and roughly clad also, but for a man, even the present day city-dweller, to let down, go a day without shaving, fly his shirt open at the throat, that's generally considered more of a luxury than a hardship. These pioneer men worked hard and endured much but the lack of roadside restrooms such as the traveler now finds every few miles along his route in the service stations that dot the highways, bothered him not nearly so much surely as it must have his faithful women. How these emigrant women would have appreciated some of the clean, tiled powder rooms now commonly provided by the big gasoline companies.

It is, no doubt, about such things that the Daughters of the American Revolution thought when they began planning this project, and at the same time they probably figured after viewing all across our land the many monuments to the miner, the fighting man, the scout, that it was high time some notice was taken of the women who gave so much in their pioneering. So this patriotic group really did a splendid job in creating the statue pictured here in Upland, California, at the foot of the bridal path where the Old Trails crossed what is now Euclid Avenue, and in the center of Springerville, Arizona, and on the ten other sites along the route these brave women traveled when they earned the title: MADONNA OF THE TRAIL.

Hell For Leather

(Continued from page 27)

"Where's Adams & Company?" asked Remme with a sigh of relief.

A sorry, mud-spattered figure of a man shoved a slip of paper across the marble slab of the cashier's cage.

"Can you cash this? I'm a cattle buyer and I need the money."

With maddening slowness the cashier carefully examined the certificate of deposit, then set out ten neat stacks of fifty-dollar gold pieces. Remme sacked the forty pounds of gold and took it to a hotel, where he saw it securely locked in the safe.

Later, with a thrill of exultation despite his fatigue, he watched passengers leap from the *Columbia* as she tied up, and make a headlong dash for Adams & Company with a bank messenger in the lead. Then Remme returned his attention to his ham and eggs.

Coming Up!

(Continued from page 2)

livan's "Cinderella of the Comstock Lode." This is the rags-to-riches story of the fabulous Eilley Orrum Bowers, who moved from a tiny log cabin in the wilderness to a $300,000 mansion in Nevada as the wife of Sandy Bowers, who owned part of the famed Comstock Lode.

Short subjects include Bill Miller's "One Man's Blizzard," and George Wolfe's harrowing account of the biggest mass execution in frontier history—the hanging of thirty-eight Sioux warriors from one scaffold at Mankato, Minnesota, on December 26, 1862.

The Old Bookaroos' Western Book Roundup, and the indispensable "Truly Western" department top off an interesting issue deliberately planned to be heavy with outlaws, sheriffs and gun-fighters.

See you later, Podner. . .

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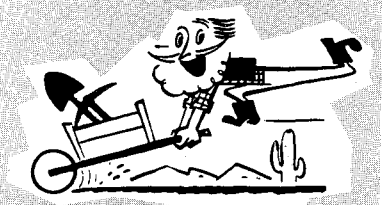

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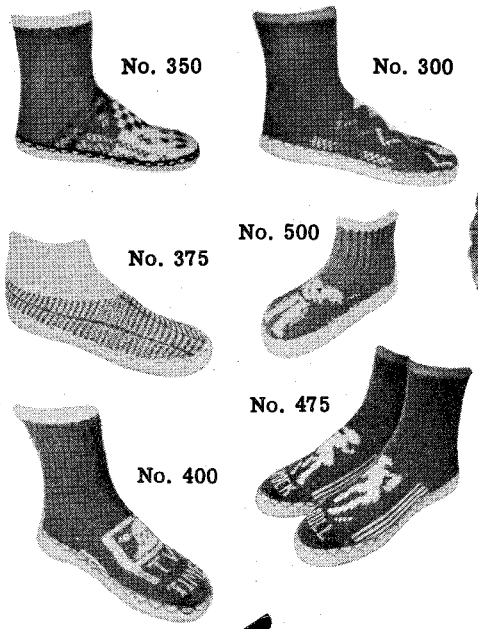

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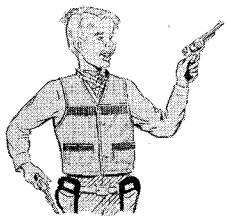

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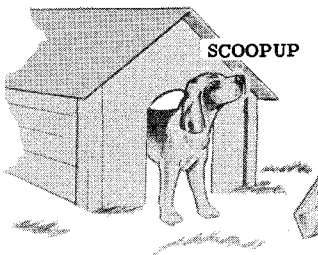

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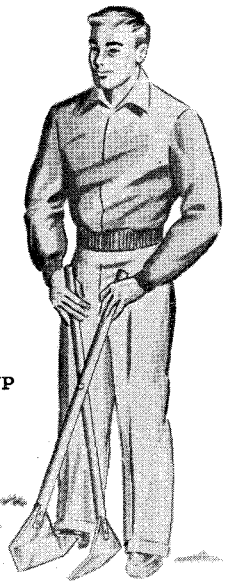

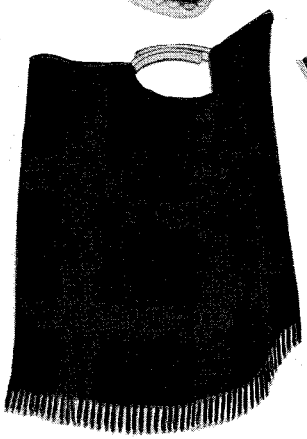

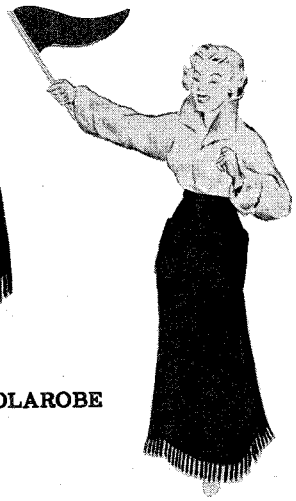

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